

A. Jeffrey Capeci, Chairman  
Mary Ann Jacob, Vice Chair  
Dan Amaral  
Jan Andras  
Kathy Fetchick  
James S. Belden



Gary Davis  
George T. Ferguson  
Kevin Fitzgerald  
Bob Merola  
Ben Spragg  
Dan Wiedemann

## TOWN OF NEWTOWN

3 Primrose Lane  
Newtown, CT. 06470  
Tel. (203) 270-4210  
www.newtown-ct.gov

**Minutes from the regular meeting of the Legislative Council  
Held in the Board Room in the Newtown Municipal Center,  
3 Primrose Street, Newtown, Connecticut  
Wednesday, November 16, 2011**

***\* These are draft minutes and as such are subject to correction by the Legislative Council at the next regular meeting. All corrections will be determined in minutes of the meeting which they were corrected.***

Chairman Capeci called the meeting to order at 7:48 pm.

**Present:** Jeffery Capeci, George Ferguson, Kathy Fetchick, Daniel Amaral, Dan Wiedemann, Jan Andras, Mary Ann Jacob, Robert Merola, Ben Spragg, Kevin Fitzgerald, James Belden, Gary Davis (8:15)

**Absent:** NONE

**Also Present:** First Selectman Pat Llodra, 16 members of the Public, and two member of the press

*Voter Comment:*

Bill Lavery from Board of Trustees for the Library requested the transfer on the agenda be granted. The server is need of repair, without it there will be no services and they have no funds to fix it.

Trisha Johnson, 12 Daniels Hill Road – She agreed that NUSCAR should be added to the ordinance but that emergency services are contributed throughout town. Without the administrative staff behind them they cannot be as effective. The Ambulance Corp is identified in the ordinance however the Ambulance Association is not. She stated that the 5013C known as the Ambulance Association should be included.

Michael Collins, volunteer for Newtown Ambulance Corp – He was speaking for himself, not the board. They get their benefit for working 30 hours per month. They work 20 hours of staffing work and 10 hours of committee work. There is no record of what the leadership is doing to get the benefit. He works hard for the exemption and wants to see everyone else do the same.

Minutes – Mr. Ferguson made motion to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2011 meeting as submitted, Ms. Jacob seconded, motion unanimously accepted.

*Communications:* NONE

*Committee Reports:* Mr. Spragg reported that the Finance Committee is researching what efforts can be made to slow the future increase of property taxes. He will turn the information that he has to the vice chair who is

## **Newtown Legislative Council**

remaining on the council. The Ordinance Committee has two ordinances they are working on, the Feline ordinance and the anti blight ordinance.

*First Selectman's Report:* Ms. Llodra has had the first meeting with FEMA for Strom Alfred. Irene's cost was in the area of \$300,000 and Alfred is about 3 times more than that. FEMA pays 75% and the town pays 25%. They will have better numbers once the debris pick up has been done.

Boggs Hill Road is very close to finishing. There are many impacts of the two storms that we have had. We have lost about a month of time getting road work done. They have put the road work in Sandy Hook out to bid to help get these roads done. They may be done in a combination of outside work and public works.

Debris pick-up is going well and is very ambitious. The residents have been tremendously cooperative by having the debris 5 feet from the curb and combining debris to make the process go faster. For the last 45 years there has been snow the first week in December so that will be a challenge if that should happen.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

An amendment to Ordinance 79, Assessment Exemption for Volunteer Fire and Ambulance Personnel—Ms. Jacob moved to approve Ordinance 79 as presented, seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald. The charge to the committee was to change an existing ordinance to add NUSAR. There is an administrative issue with interpretation of the ordinance. Nothing that the ordinance committee did changed that. Mr. Merola clarified that the Corp is who go to the calls and the Association is a group of administrators. Historically that is how they have been referred to. His recommendation would be to pass the ordinance because their charge was to add NUSCAR. Ms. Fetchick suggested that they approve this change and then go back and revisit the Ambulance Corp vs Association. Motion unanimously accepted by roll call vote.

Mr. Spragg moved to refer the Ordinance 79 back to the ordinance committee to resolve the Ambulance Corp issue, Mr. Belden seconded motion passed 11 YES to 1 NO (Jacob)

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Strategic Plan of Economic Development – Ms. Jacob made motion to accept the Strategic Plan of Economic Development as written and discussed at the public hearing. Ms. Fetchick seconded.

Marge Olinger, Don Sharp and Elizabeth Stocker made a presentation of the commission's plans. A copy of the presentation is attached (attachment A)

The 62 Million dollar goal is to be achieved by the 5 goals that follow it and each goal has strategy goals. It is partly on the economy as well as the people in town. Over the next 5 years they should be able to achieve this. Each commission member is taking one of the strategies and bringing it forward. All of the action plans have someone working on them finding out how to move forward and what resources are needed. They will be coming forward with details on a budget.

The EDC does not think that they will decrease tax but it will help out. They stand for the character of the town.

Ms. Llodra explained that Newtown has the highest ever vacancy rate of commercial property which is a challenge. She also explained that the EDC is a working commission of volunteers who do not show up to a meeting once a month they work all month long. They have laid out the goals for themselves. Ms. Llodra stated that they need to make a goal not to say reduce taxes but rather mitigate increasing taxes. We are out of balance and we need to get into balance to reduce the tax burden.

### Newtown Legislative Council

Mr. Capeci asked with regard to bringing in new business to town, what can we offer to business that other towns cannot? What makes Newtown more attractive? Mr. Sharp replied that it was location, railroad tracks, personal service and hand holding. Motion passed by roll call vote.

Transfers – \$8,500 from Contingency to Contractual Services for Code Red and \$21,117 from Contingency to Contractual Services for Library computer server and switches upgrade – Mr. Spragg moved to transfer \$8,500 from Contingency to Contractual Services for Code Red. Ms. Andras seconded. This is for the cost for the contract that ended on 11/1/11. There will be another transfer like this one for Storm Alfred. Motion unanimously accepted.

Mr. Spragg moved to transfer \$21,117 from Contingency to Contract Services for Library computer server and switch upgrade, Mr. Ferguson seconded. This was an unanticipated failure. \$14,000 is for server hardware and the balance is for the switches. The town has offered have offered its technical department to assist and become involved in budgeting and planning. This vendor was part of the original bidding process 14 years ago when the building was built. They know the system and this is a replacement, not an upgrade. Ms. Llodra explained that this is a vendor relationship that has been in place for 14 years. Putting this out to bid could damage their relationship. They are an agency for the town and not a department. Mr. Merola explained that he is familiar with this company and they work a lot with 501c's and believed that if this went out to bid that there would likely not be a savings. Motion unanimously accepted.

Reserve McLendon Property on Frontage Road for open space in lieu of tax foreclosure per charter section 7-90(c) – Ms. Jacob moved to reserve the McLendon property for open space in lieu of tax foreclosure per charter section 90(c), Mr. Belden seconded. Mr. McLendon is diseased and the property has been probated to the Town. It has no access to the street and runs parallel to 84 so the land is not buildable. The value of the property is \$75,000 and the back taxes are about \$8,000. Mr. Spragg suggested offering it to the people on Whitewood Road so the town can kept it on the grand list. Ms. Llodra explained that before Mr. McLendon died he made an agreement with the town to take it over for open space in lieu of taxes. Motion passes 11 Yes to 1 NO (Spragg)

*Voter Comment:* NONE

*Announcements:* Mr. Capeci announced that this is the last meeting of this particular council and thanked everyone for all the hard work and sacrifices that were made. He also reviewed the accomplishments that have been made in the last two years.

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:54pm

Arlene Miles, Clerk Pro-Tem

*Attachment A*