

A **REGULAR MEETING** was held by the City Council & WPC Authority in the City Hall Auditorium on Monday, October 6, 2014.

Those in attendance included Mayor Elinor Carbone, Corporation Counsel Raymond Rigat, City Councilors Paul Cavagnero, Gregg Cogswell, Anne Ruwet, Drake Waldron and Paul Samele. City Councilor Christopher Anderson was absent. Atty. Bill O'Connell, Board of Education Facilities Director David Bascetta and Mayoral Aide Timothy Waldron were also present.

Mayor Carbone called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Samele, the Council voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the Public Hearing and Regular Meeting held September 15, 2014. Councilor Ruwet abstained.

On a motion by Councilor Cavagnero, seconded by Councilor Cogswell, the Council voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the Special Mtg. held jointly with the Board of Finance on September 24, 2014. Councilors Waldron and Samele abstained.

On a motion by Councilor Samele, seconded by Councilor Cogswell, the Council voted unanimously to accept the correction to the minutes of the Regular Meeting held September 2, 2014.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the Council voted unanimously to open the meeting to the public. There was no one present who wished to speak.

RESOLUTION - THS ADA SITE PROJECT

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Samele, the Council voted unanimously to adopt the following resolution:

RESOLVED :

That the City Council/Mayor in the City of Torrington, with the Mayor as its representative, authorizes the Torrington Board of Education to apply to the Commissioner of Education and to accept or reject a grant for the Torrington High School ADA Site Project.

RESOLVED:

That the Torrington High School ADA Site Project Building Committee is hereby established as THE BUILDING COMMITTEE with regard to the proposed Torrington High School ADA Site Project, naming David Bascetta, Director of Facilities as THE BUILDING COMMITTEE.

RESOLVED:

That the City Council in the City of Torrington with the Mayor as its representative, hereby authorizes, at least, the preparation of schematic drawings and outline specifications for the Torrington High School ADA Site Project.

RESOLVED:

That the City of Torrington approve the Torrington High School ADA Site Project in the amount of \$196,500. The funds were budgeted for the 2014-2015 fiscal year from the Board of Education's Capital Improvement Fund. This project is eligible for reimbursement from the State of Connecticut at the rate of 72.5% on the dollar, leaving The City of Torrington's share to be approximately \$54,038.00.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion by Councilor Cogswell, seconded by Councilor Ruwet, the Council voted unanimously to enter executive session under pending litigation at 6:46 p.m. inviting Atty. Rigat and Atty. O'Connell.

OPEN SESSION

On a motion by Councilor Cogswell, seconded by Councilor Ruwet, the Council voted unanimously to enter open session at 7:03 p.m.

SIGN EXECUTIVE AGREEMENT

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the Council voted unanimously to authorize the Mayor to sign the Executive Agreement on Claim #143916900.

PURCHASE CISCO NETWORK SWITCHES

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Cogswell, the Council voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of the IT Director and Purchasing Agent and authorize the Mayor to award the purchase of seven Cisco Network Switches for \$29,912.49 and to authorize the Mayor to act on behalf of the City regarding the execution of the contract and its administration.

THS ATHLETIC FIELDS PAYMENT

On a motion by Councilor Cogswell, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the Council voted unanimously to authorize the payment of \$6,316.10 to Gale Assocs. for invoice #1407441, architectural services at the THS Athletic Field renovation project, having been approved by the THS Athletic Fields Building Committee on Sept. 29, 2014.

SMALL CITIES INVOICES

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Samele, the City voted unanimously to authorize the following payments from Fund #270, 2013 Citywide Housing Rehab.:

<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Invoice #</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>
SafeHomes, Inc.	\$400.00	7141	9/7/14	Lead Testing
City of Torrington	\$225.00	Req. #13SC20	9/9/2014	(3) Title Searches
City of Torrington	\$150.00	Req. #13SC19	8/18/2014	(2) Title Searches

ADD TO AGENDA

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Samele, the Council voted unanimously to add Section B to the Agenda.

Section B

THS ATHLETIC FIELDS PAYMENT

On a motion by Councilor Cogswell, seconded by Councilor Waldron, the Council voted unanimously to authorize the payment of \$753,177.33 to H. I. Stone for Application #4, for THS Track & Field Construction/Renovations through September 30, 2014. Mr. Tim Waldron reported that the committee approved this invoice.

DISCUSSION - Shared Services and Information Sharing, Board of Education

Mayor Carbone said that in an effort to build a working relationship with the Board of Education through the budget process, she reached out to the Chairman to explore the potential for combining municipal and school district operations relating to finance.

Councilor Cavagnero added that shared services would benefit the City with efficiency and transparency. He said public education has moved from education into social services and employment tracking and urged City oversight of the Board of Education budget, to see how the funds are being used and what efficiencies can be found. He noted that things like hiring an assistant superintendent, allotting substantial monies to a retiring executive assistant, and creating another administrator function in the High School to supervise yet another alternate school were never clearly presented during the budget process. Councilor Cavagnero said that our education system reflects what we are as a town, and speaks to the goals and aspirations of the community. There has to be more input on the City side, he said.

SCHEDULE MEETINGS

Councilor Cavagnero made a motion to schedule a minimum of three special joint meetings per year with the Board of Education for the following purposes:

- Meeting #1, to be held no later than September 30th of each year, to discuss the Board of Education district goals for the current school year.
- Meeting #2, to be held no later than January 31st of each school year to review the budget drivers that the Board of Education will use to form their budget for the upcoming school year.
- Meeting #3, to be held no later than July 31st of each school year to review essentially how the Board of Education feels it achieved its goals for that school year.

Councilor Cavagnero said the Council will get to look at the big picture in this way and explained that this is the opposite of micro managing, it is macro managing. He said that these are reasonable requests that do not compromise the statutory right of the Board of Finance to have final approval of the budget, and that Council needs the ability to learn in a structured way what the Board of Education members and administrators are planning to do and why, for each school year.

Mayor Carbone added that the Board of Education acts as an agent of the State and not as a City Agency. She said it needs to be looked at to some degree as a department of the City, with some responsibility to the City. She said she is looking for economies, and more fluidity of budget information to be put into context with the whole City budget, which has a tremendous impact on all our taxpayers. Mayor Carbone said the Council could issue an invitation to the Board of Education to create an open line of communication about Board goals and how they are to be funded. She said that meeting three times a year is not a tremendous burden and having the budget picture painted will help City Council make final determinations on department budgets that it does have control over.

Councilor Cogswell asked if the three meetings are for City Council and the Board of Education only, or if they are to include the Board of Finance. Councilor Cavagnero said there are pros and cons either way, but having the Board of Finance at the meeting would change the dynamic.

Councilor Samele asked if these meetings are to be informational only. Mayor Carbone read section C4-4 of the City Charter stating that the Board of Councilmen may compel any City board, commission, committee or any member thereof or a City official or City employee to furnish it with any information or materials which would be of assistance to it in performance of its function.

Section B *Continued*

Councilor Cavagnero gave an example of the recent hiring of a new administrator for a school to work program. We are not an employment agency, he said, but an educational institution. If the school district decides there is a need for an alternate school to help find internships, job placement and supporting curriculum, then the City should be able to partner with the school board in that endeavor. Councilor Cavagnero stressed that the Mayor runs the City and she is the person who is best capable of coordinating those efforts. He said that these meetings will allow the Board of Education to discuss their goals which will be tied to dollars. They can tell us what their goals are, he said, and then suddenly we can talk about 'why'. Councilor Cavagnero said he thinks we have the right and the obligation to make this request, which will ultimately end in a better, more efficient school district.

Mayor Carbone said there are so many services that our financial offices can share through the business director, the payroll staff, and the benefits coordinator, for example. Efficiencies can be found she said, and more importantly, more fluidity in the exchange of information between the City and the Board of Education on finances. She said she intends to schedule a joint meeting to discuss the possibility of shared services, but in the meantime, the plan for these three meetings will begin to open the dialog with the Board of Education.

Council Samele said this is a wonderful idea and a good start.

ADD TO AGENDA

On a motion by Councilor Samele, seconded by Councilor Cogswell, the Council voted unanimously to add to the agenda.

SCHEDULE MEETINGS

Mayor Carbone summarized Councilor Cavagnero's motion as follows:

To invite the Board of Education to consider a meeting schedule that will occur three times during the year: in January during the budget development phase, in September during the goal-setting phase, and in July during the year-end evaluation phase. Councilor Samele seconded the motion.

Councilor Cavagnero agreed that this correctly describes his motion, to review goals in September that were set in the summer, to look at the budget drivers for the forthcoming year in January, and then to basically have a performance review at the end of the year on how well they met their goals.

Councilor Ruwet said she wants to make sure that the Council considers this a partnership with the Board of Education. These information-sharing meetings are good because we are concerned about both the taxpayers and our children's education, she said, and stronger language regarding partnership needs to be included.

Councilor Cogswell said he appreciates the sentiment and is supportive of this. He added that including the Board of Finance would increase the conversation and be a benefit to the City.

The vote to schedule three meetings with the Board of Education was unanimously approved.

BUILDING DEPT. REPORT

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Samele, the Council voted unanimously to accept the Building Dept. Report for August, 2014.

BUSINESS BY DEPT. HEADS

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Samele, the Council voted unanimously to consider business presented by Department Heads. There was no business presented.

BUSINESS BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Cogswell, the Council voted unanimously to consider business presented by the Mayor and members of the City Council.

Councilor Ruwet thanked the Council and the Mayor for their condolences on her father's passing.

Councilor Waldron announced an upcoming event to open the new Athletic Field.

Mayor Carbone said she is proud of the awe-inspiring Athletic Field, and acknowledged the Boy Scouts from Troop One. She presented a Declaration to Joseph L. Quartiero, CMC, Connecticut's 2014 Town Clerk of the Year in appreciation of his commitment to provide the highest level of service for patrons of the City Clerk's Office, saying he is a shining example and she is very proud to have him represent the great City of Torrington.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Councilor Waldron, seconded by Councilor Cogswell, the Council voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:45 p.m.