



**Ansonia Board of Aldermen
Special Meeting Minutes**

RECEIVED FOR FILE

15 DEC 28 PM 12:18

December 15, 2015

Elizabeth Lynch
TOWN AND CITY CLERK
ANSONIA, CONNECTICUT

Call to Order

The Special Meeting of the Ansonia Board of Aldermen was called to order at 7 p.m. by Aldermanic President Philip Tripp. All those present rose and pledged allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Roll Call

The secretary called the roll:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Randolph Carroll, R1 – present | Ashley Rogers, R4 – present |
| Charles Stowe, R1 – present | Anthony Cassetti, R5 – present |
| Philip Tripp, R2 – present | Joan Radin, R5 – present |
| Lorie Vaccaro, R2 – present | Matthew Edo, R6 – present |
| Denice Hunt, D3 – present | Patrick Henri, R6 – present |
| Joseph Jeanette, D3 – absent | David Blackwell, Jr., R7 – present |
| Richard Kaslaitis, III R4 – present | Frank DeLibero, R7 – present |

President Tripp declared a quorum of 13 present, 1 absent.

Public Session

Ed Marin, 10 Beech Street

I would like thank you for getting the street paved. It's been a long time. I know everybody didn't agree with it. For a little history, I've been there for 34 years and the town has maintained the road, patched it, repaired it, put the sewers in it, picked up debris, snow removal, ice removal, garbage removal, for the last 34 years. So as far as we're concerned as residents, it's a public road; a City road. I can finally say we're proud to say we live on Beech Street. They did a great job; you should all come up and take a look at it. Thank you very much.

Tim Holman, 48 Elm Street

I'm here on behalf of Teamsters 677. You have an issue tonight that you're going vote on the contract for Public Works. We would just like to thank the Mayor and the staff for helping us reach the agreement that we reached. If you look at the contract real good, you'll find that the City in the long run is going to save some money. So again, we thank you and we appreciate everything you're doing as a committee. God bless you.

President Tripp asked three times if any other person wished to speak. Being none, he declared the Public Session closed.

Review and consideration of municipal report of the Board of Apportionment and Taxation from meeting dated December 14, 2015

Alderman Radin asked, on Page 7 – it says Public Works purchase two new trucks. The ambulance has been trying to get a new truck to replace older vehicles, so I don't understand how we could come up with \$120,000 to replace two more trucks.

President Tripp stated, this Board of A&T recommendation is not final until the Aldermen act on it or vote on it, so right now the floor is open for any motions from the Aldermen.

Alderman Stowe MOVED to purchase one truck for Public Works in the amount of \$60,000; SECONDED by Alderman Kaslaitis.

Alderman Stowe stated, I am on the Public Works Subcommittee.

Alderman Edo asked, why just one?

Alderman Stowe stated, right now we're not exactly sure what Public Works budget is right now. It's extra money that's being spent, and we feel that they only need one right now, and in January and February of 2016-17, we are going to purchase the second truck.

Alderman Blackwell asked, can we approve the purchase of both trucks tonight and then do as Mr. Stowe stated, instead of rehashing this through the Board of A&T, if they've both been approved through Board of A&T, if we approve both tonight - one to be purchased this budget and the next one in the following budget?

Mr. Nimons stated, that will be in next year's budget. When you approve next year's budget you will actually have approved it.

Alderman Carroll stated, you don't know what the budget is, so why would we approve \$60,000 if we don't know what the budget is?

Alderman Stowe stated, because we spoke with the Finance Department and they think that we're going to be fine with that. That's good enough for me.

Mr. Nimons stated, he has two trucks that keep breaking down.

Alderman Henri stated, so we have two trucks that keep breaking down, and we need two new trucks, as the Board of A&T has approved. Is that not correct?

Mr. Nimons stated, he can manage with one truck.

Alderman Stowe stated, to explain part of the decision process, there are a lot of departments in this City and they are all in need. We try to be fair with all departments and make sure they get what they can live with. That makes it fair for the rest of the departments. We're going to be fine.

Alderman Henri asked, can I solicit comments from Doug Novak? He is in the audience.

Mr. Novak stated, I went to the Board of A&T last night and I explained the condition of the two vehicles. They are 2002 GMC 2500 mason dump trucks. Both vehicles have rotted bodies. I just spent almost \$5,000 on one of the vehicles to repair the front end. There is some frame rot and floor rot on the trucks, and one of the trucks has an exhaust leak that's going to be quite extensive to repair. When you drive the truck you smell like you've been delivering fuel oil all day long. The trucks have outlived their usefulness. If they make it through the winter, we'll keep our fingers crossed to get lucky. If they don't then we're down plow trucks. I just can't see the City being behind the 8-ball when it comes to taking care of the roads during the wintertime. That is the main concern why we buy equipment here – for our winter snow operations. My honest opinion is that these trucks will not last over the winter. I confirmed with our chief mechanic. Again, I don't want to keep throwing good money after bad equipment. It doesn't make any sense.

Mr. Novak continued, the age and status of our main, larger dump trucks and plows – I have five newer vehicles – 2008, 2013, 2015. Three of the trucks are assigned to the Hilltop, one is assigned to the West Side and the other truck is up in the northeastern corner. The rest of the trucks are rear-spread sanders/salters; they're not compatible with spreading just salt live we've intended to do since I came here two years ago. The one GMC is assigned to the north end – the flats, that's a steady snow run for that one vehicle, and the other GMC mason dump runs around the City taking care of the municipal buildings where needed.

President Tripp stated, so you have five newer, big trucks, correct?

Mr. Novak replied, yes.

Alderman Henri asked that the motion be repeated:

Alderman Stowe MOVED to purchase one truck for Public Works in the amount of \$60,000; SECONDED by Alderman Kaslatis.

A roll call vote was taken as follows:

NAME	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Carroll	X		
Stowe	X		
Vaccaro	X		
Hunt	X		
Jeanette			
Rogers	X		
Kaslaitis	X		
Cassetti	X		
Radin	X		
Edo		X	
Henri		X	
Blackwell		X	
DeLibero	X		
Tripp	X		
TOTALS:	10	3	

The MOTION PASSED 10 Yes, 3 No, 0 Abstentions.

Alderman Radin continued, I have another question. On the amount in all of these where they're talking about grants, isn't the City responsible for some portion, or don't they have to come up with some portion of money on these grants? I don't ever see anything. I don't understand. I know when you get a grant, the City is responsible for 10 or 20 percent of the grant. Where does that show up?

Ms. O'Malley stated, I think they're going to change the way they report back to this Board, on the grants especially. I can through them if you'd like.

Alderman Radin stated, I would like, yes, because I know the City is responsible for some portion.

Ms. O'Malley stated, for some of the grants. Some are non-matching.

The first one is \$250,000 for the Webster Hose floor replacement – that is not a grant, that's moving money in so that the Webster Hose floor replacement can commence.

The second grant is for Fountain Lake Commerce Park. We have \$1 million, and there is a match to that. We intend to use State funds to match that grant. That's our portion, that's the \$573,594 portion that we're responsible for. Fingers cross that's going to be covered with State grants.

The third one is a \$400,000 grant we received for our Segment 8 Riverwalk. That's an 80/20. We do have a 20 percent match on that grant of \$80,000. The State and the Feds are coming up with \$320,000.

Next, \$164,000 grant for Assessment and Remediation of our City-owned buildings. That's a non-matching – we have no responsibility with that grant.

Next, \$50,000 – a non-matching grant – that's for downtown redevelopment.

Lastly, \$20,430 for referendum projects – that is coming from Board of A&T Contingency funds.

We've already discussed the vehicles.

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to approve; SECONDED by Alderman Kaslaffis. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Review and consideration of Public Works Union Contract

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to approve the Public Works Contract; SECONDED by Alderman DeLibero.

Alderman Vaccaro stated, I think it's a win-win for both the union members and the City. I push for its approval.

Alderman Carroll stated, on this contract, the City will be saving \$264,000, which I feel is a great savings.

Corporation Counsel Marini stated, we are very pleased to report that you have in front of you two contracts – one for the Public Works employees, one for the Municipal employees. The Mayor has been present for negotiations. He's made very clear to staff and to counsel his objectives – to do good by the City of Ansonia and to do good by the employees. We're really ecstatic to report that the savings on both of these two contracts together for a period of five years exceeds \$700,000. One contract, Public Works, has already been ratified by the employees. We'd like to extend a thank you to the Public Works employees for stepping up for the good of the City and really doing something great here by putting this forward. [Applause].

Attorney Warren Holcomb from Bertram Moses & Devlin, who negotiated the agreements and headed up the negotiation team with both units, is here tonight to answer questions and give a breakdown of the contracts and what they consist of.

Attorney Holcomb reviewed the material terms of the two five-year contracts which expire June 30, 2020, with the Board.

In the Public Works contract, the main objective we had was to try to control the health insurance costs. The Public Works union switched unions and went over to the Teamsters, who have their own health plan. We took a look at what the

Teamsters health plan had, and decided the savings were significant enough that we would go over to the Teamsters health plan. The savings projected over the course of the contract is \$369,000. In addition, in the current contract the City pays for life insurance with an AD&D double indemnity feature in it. That is also covered by the Teamster plan so the City no longer has to pay that – resulting in savings of approximately \$22,500 over the 5-year life of the contract.

In terms of the general wage increases – the percentages are 1.5 the first year retroactive to July 1, 2015 and 2 percent each of the remaining 4 years of the contract. Those costs are approximately \$127,456.

Other changes – new hire employees after January 1, 2016, the maximum vacation time is 5 weeks, and for new hires it's going to be 4 weeks. That will be some downstream savings for the City.

Retiree medical benefits for employees hired prior to the end of this contract will continue. For non-Medicare-eligible employees, right now the contract says you pay 80 percent for the employee, 50 percent for the spouse in terms of premium contributions. That stayed the same. But we added that they had to be 55 years of age in order to get that benefit, and that the maximum they could receive it was 10 years. That was designed for a situation where, for example, if somebody is 20 years old and they work 25 years and retire at 45, and that way the City would have been paying retiree benefits for 20 years.

Once the employees go into the Teamster plan, the retiree medical benefits will be pursuant to the Teamster plan, so the City won't be paying for those at all. In addition, for employees that are hired after the end of this contract, the City won't be paying for any Medicare supplement insurance, which will also result in a significant savings – again, that's a downstream savings.

There were various other minor things, such as workers compensation – a 12 month maximum that they can be out – we lowered that to six months as an incentive to come back to work. If somebody is seriously injured the Mayor can always extend that, or the Board of Aldermen could. In addition, you paid the difference between the workers compensation benefits and their base salary. That ended up where somebody could be out on workers compensation and because the workers compensation benefits are not taxable, they would actually be making more money than if they came to work, which is also a disincentive to come back to work. We corrected that by treating the workers compensation benefits for the purpose of computing the wage differential as the net rather than the gross.

The bottom line is the projected savings over the five-year term, subtracting out the cost of the increases, is approximately \$264,000.

A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstention (Blackwell).

Review and consideration of Municipal Employees Union Contract

**Alderman Carroll MOVED to approve the Municipal Employees' contract;
SECONDED by Alderman Henri.**

Attorney Holcomb stated, for the Municipal Employees contract, it is a five-year contract. They got the same deal that the Police got – the high-deductible health plan with the HSA feature. They can have a buy-up if they want to stay in the old PPO or HMO plan, which means the City pays exactly the same in terms of the cost of that insurance. That projected savings is \$200,000 for a full year and \$100,000 for the half-year. That projected savings is around \$900,000 over the contract.

On the retiree medical benefits, for employees hired after 12/1/2015 who are Medicare eligible, we will no longer pay the Medicare supplemental insurance for the dependent spouse. It will be for the retiree only for a maximum period of 10 years. That will be a future savings in the retiree medical benefit area.

For vacations we did the same thing we did with Public Works. For new hires their maximum vacation time is 4 weeks instead of 5 weeks.

We paid higher wage increases because of the additional costs that we saved. Year one, 2.7 percent, year two, 2.7 percent, year three, 2.7 percent, and the final two years 2.75 percent. The total cost over the course of the contract would be \$277,354. In addition, we paid a one-time signing bonus of \$250 to each employee, which is \$9,500 and made certain changes in terms of some upgrades. The Step progression has changed – we went with the Public Works model, so now you have a job rate and the entry-level rate is 80 percent of the job rate. It will change with the general wage increase but the differential will always be the 80 percent. They'll move up five percent every six months to the job rate. Like the Public Works contract, if somebody comes in and has good experience, you can hire them at a higher rate or advance them at a three-month period of time, if they do an exceptional job. That is really up to the Mayor.

For employees who have reached the maximum of their sick leave, we added a buy-back provision. We assigned a cost to it of approximately \$15,000 a year. For the most part, once employees have reached their maximum sick leave bank, they tend to use most of their days because they would otherwise lose them. The overall estimated savings is somewhere between \$500,000 - \$550,000 over the life of the contract.

Alderman Carroll stated, I think the City did a fantastic job. I would like to thank the City. We saved over a million bucks.

Alderman Vaccaro stated, we should thank the union members as well.

A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 12 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstention (Blackwell).

Review and consideration of salary resolution and job descriptions

a. Director of Constituent Services

Alderman Edo **MOVED** to approve the job description of Director of Constituent Services; **SECONDED** by Alderman Vaccaro. A voice vote was taken and the **MOTION PASSED 13-0.**

b. Land Use Administrator

Alderman Stowe MOVED to AMEND the Resolution – the recommendation is starting at \$50,000 to \$60,000 – I would like to recommend that this position start at \$55,000 and in six months is reviewed by City Hall with the option to up the salary to \$60,000. And approve the job description. SECONDED by Alderman Edo.

President Tripp stated, I would like Corporation Counsel Marini's opinion – if the recommendation has a different dollar amount, do the Aldermen have the option to change that?

Corporation Counsel Marini replied, yes, the Aldermen can amend the resolution and pass the amended resolution.

Alderman Radin stated, I happen to be Chairman of the Salary Committee, we decided to start at \$50,000 and in six months the person, if they're working and doing the job that they're supposed to be doing, we would review it. I'm sure the person has to prove that they're doing their job. I think \$50,000 is a good salary to start it and we decided on that last night. I don't see why we have to make an amendment to do that.

Alderman Stowe stated, I appreciate Alderman Radin's efforts and work. I did, at that meeting, suggest this salary. This individual is not only going to work full-time during the day, but they're going to work at Zoning, ZBA and Wetlands meetings at night, and extra hours. If this person is capable of doing this job it's worth every penny of it. I'm not trying to be rude to Alderman Radin, it's my suggestion - \$55,000 and within six months it can be bumped up to \$60,000, but that's the Mayor's Office's call.

Alderman Vaccaro stated, she has over 20 years experience in land use. She is CASIO certified. She has already done wonders in that office downstairs – she has streamlined it, and is there for land use permits, etc. She comes here from Plymouth, CT every day

- it's a haul driving down here every day and driving home. She won't be taking any City benefits. I think it's a big savings to the City and we owe it to the public to approve this position. In that motion we should also approve the job description as written.

Alderman Stowe MOVED to AMEND his MOTION to also approve the job description as written; Alderman Edo SECONDED the AMENDMENT.

A roll call vote on the MOTION AS AMENDED was taken as follows:

NAME	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Carroll	X		
Stowe	X		
Vaccaro	X		
Hunt	X		
Jeanette			
Rogers	X		
Kaslaitis	X		
Cassetti	X		
Radin		X	
Edo	X		
Henri	X		
Blackwell	X		
DeLibero	X		
Tripp	X		
TOTALS:	12	1	

The MOTION PASSED by a vote of 12 Yes, 1 No.

c. Land Use Director

This item has been removed at this time.

RESOLUTION: Amendment to City Retirement Plan

Attorney Holcomb explained, the Resolution is pretty straightforward. This is just to make a few amendments – one is to bring some of the language in the old plan up to date, and also, to increase the contributions that the employees will be making in the plan.

A couple of them are technical corrections. For example, there is no longer any deferred retirement under the plan because of the soft freeze. The proposed increase is from 2 percent to move it up .5 percent annually up to a total of 4 percent. The first increase would be effective January 1, 2016 and the additional half percent each January thereafter until January 1, 2019 when it will be the full four percent.

There was the provision in 21a36. Part of the language said "the member of the Retirement Board from the City Board shall be appointed by the Mayor," and being added to that is "and must be approved by the Board of Aldermen."

The last proposed change is that employees can stop making contributions to the plan, but if they do until there's a qualifying event, they can't withdraw any benefits from the retirement plan, by law. What happens is, their benefit would be frozen at that point in time based upon what their contributions were. Their contributions stay in there until there's a separation from employment.

Alderman Edo MOVED to adopt the resolution; SECONDED by Alderman DeLibero. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Consideration of Contract: ARMS/HVAC contract extension

Alderman Vaccaro MOVED to authorize Mayor Casetti to execute the contract extension as written; SECONDED by Alderman Edo.

Alderman Radin asked, there is only a one-year workmanship warranty?

Don Smith, Professional Engineer stated, yes, that would be standard, a one-year warranty on workmanship. The equipment varies - either 1, 5 or 20-year warranty depending on what component of the equipment it is.

A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Executive Session

At approximately 7:40 p.m., Alderman DeLibero MOVED to enter Executive Session to discuss the following:

- a. **Consideration and review of sale and assignment agreement: Fountain Lake, LLC**
- b. **Potential Purchase of City Property: Castle Lane**
- c. **Town and City Clerk re: personnel matter**

The Mayor, Corporation Counsel, and Economic Development Director were invited to remain in the Chambers, as well as Attorney John Sponheimer and Town and City Clerk Beth Lynch; SECONDED by Alderman Carroll. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Return to Regular Session

At approximately 8:27 p.m., Alderman Kaslaffis MOVED to return to Regular Session; SECONDED by Alderman DeLibero. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Items from Executive Session

Consideration and review of sale and assignment agreement: Fountain Lake, LLC

Alderman Carroll MOVED to authorize the Mayor to execute the Fountain Lake Agreement with revisions as discussed in Executive Session. SECONDED by Alderman Kaslaitis. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Potential Purchase of City Property: Castle Lane

Alderman Carroll MOVED to authorize Corporation Counsel to proceed as discussed regarding Castle Lane in Executive Session; SECONDED by Alderman Cassetti. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Town and City Clerk re: personnel matter

Alderman Edo MOVED to extend the offer as discussed in Executive Session; SECONDED by Alderman Cassetti. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

Adjournment

Alderman Cassetti MOVED to adjourn; SECONDED by Alderman DeLibero. A voice vote was taken and the MOTION PASSED 13-0.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Bruder, Secretary
Ansonia Board of Aldermen