

# The Town of Washington

"THE FIRST WASHINGTON OF ALL"

April 10, 2017

7:00 p.m.

Approved Minutes

- **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor John Fox Sullivan called the Town Council meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Council members Jerry Goebel, Mary Ann Kuhn, Katharine Leggett, Patrick O'Connell and Gary Aichele, and Brad Schneider were present. Town Attorney John Bennett was absent. Town Clerk Laura Dodd was present.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that the annual Food Pantry Day was coming upon May 13, 2017 and asked the Council to consider adding the Town's annual Food Pantry contribution to the agenda and the Council agreed by consensus.

Council also agreed by consensus to Mr. Aichele's request that an update on the Warren Avenue property be added to the agenda under Old Business.

- **MINUTES:** January 9, 2017 minutes: Ms. Kuhn asked that the spelling of Sharron Proper's name be corrected under Public Forum. She also gave Ms. Dodd some typographic and grammar corrections. Mr. Schneider made a motion to approve the January 9, 2017 as corrected and Mr. Aichele seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

- **REPORTS:** Treasury Report: Mr. Goebel reviewed the attached Bank Summary Report, the Bills-To-Be-Paid list and the Additional Bills to Be Paid List.

Mr. Schneider asked about the recurring 200,000 to 300,000 gallons treated but not billed water figure.

Mr. Goebel discussed that water treated but not billed was being held in the 250,000 gallon reservoir and also throughout the system.

Ms. Dodd discussed that there had also been problems with the pump switch not working properly causing water to overflow from the reservoir and there had also been problems with the data lines for the pump operation which had been destroyed by bears but that at the present times those problems had been resolved.

Mr. Schneider expressed his concerns regarding the water loss and discussed that he would be working with Troy Jenkins, the plant operator, to resolve water loss issues in the future.

There was also a short discussion about planning and budgeting for the replacement of several defective and old meters each year so the Town could eventually get to a point where the meters could be read electronically and to eliminate loss of income from incorrect readings.

Mr. Aichele asked about the Meals and Lodging taxes through March.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that the Meals and Lodging taxes were 5.6% ahead for the first 9 months of this fiscal year compared to last year.

Mr. Aichele made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report and Mr. Schneider seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

Planning Commission: Chairman Catlin discussed that copies of the draft 2.1 of the Comprehensive Plan were available. He reported that the Planning Commission was in the process of identifying goals and the areas of concerns and would next be working on adding objectives to reaching those goals. He discussed that he was looking forward to the work session with the Council on April 17, 2017 to review the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Aichele discussed that there were pages missing from his copy of the draft Comprehensive Plan and Ms. Dodd discussed that she would reprint out copies for everyone.

Architectural Review Board: Mayor Sullivan reported that the ARB would be meeting to consider two applications for signage.

Mr. Aichele asked if the ARB had the authority to approach a property owner in regards to complying with Historic District Ordinance.

Mr. O'Connell discussed that if a property owner was not in compliance that situation should be handled by the Zoning Administrator.

There was a short discussion of the fact that the Town was exempt from having to go before the ARB but had always done so regarding the modifications done to Town Hall and the building of the Wastewater Water Treatment Plant, which was just good policy.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that the recent Film Festival held in town had been successful with about 600 attendees, of which, 20-25% had never been to the town before. He discussed that the Trinity Church were beginning to improve the landscaping in front of the Church which should be completed for the Garden Tour on April 29, 2017.

- TOWN ATTORNEY: Mr. Bennett was absent.

- OLD BUSINESS: a). Town Hall Stone Wall Update: Ms. Dodd discussed that the various contractors she had contacted regarding the repair of the Town Hall stone wall had not replied with a quote. She received several suggestions of who to contact.

- b). Warren Avenue Property Update: Mr. Aichele discussed the sale of the Avon Hall building property and that the new owners seemed to be doing well and had twice invited the town over but there were still two parcels remaining to be dealt with. He discussed that there had been interest expressed in the Warren Avenue property and in accord with the resolution adopted when the first portion was sold interest was being directed to Mr. Bennett. He discussed when those interests developed with a purchase price and a development plan that was consistent with historic character of the town then the Council would consider the offer. He discussed that the Council had reviewed updates with Mr. Bennett in several closed session regarding proposals but no action had been taken. He discussed that no offers had come in for the parcel behind Avon Hall.

He discussed that the council had not made any decision regarding whether the Warren Avenue building could be replaced or demolished and had only passed the resolution made when the Avon Hall building parcel had been sold which included that the development of the different parcels be consistent with character and history of the town. He discussed that any offer consistent with the resolution should be brought to Mr. Bennett.

Allan Comp discussed that there were specific rules regarding demolition in the ARB regulations that would have to be complied with by any purchaser of the property.

Mr. Aichele discussed that if a purchaser desired to demolish the building that they would have to demonstrate that restoration was not feasible.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that there were complicated procedures in place before demolition would be allowed.

He discussed that Col. John Bourgeois had for several years conducted a Fourth of July concert in the county and that it was very likely that this year he would be conducting a Fourth of July concert on the weekend before the Fourth at Avon Hall that would be open to the public,

• NEW BUSINESS: a). Authorization of Public Hearing on May 8, 2017 on the FY 2017-2018 Draft Budget: Mayor Sullivan discussed the draft budget including that the budget showed a Town budget revenue as \$361,000 which reflected an estimated \$5,000 increase over the current Meals and Lodging tax income. He discussed that the Town revenues would produce a surplus of \$179,000. He discussed that the user charges for water and wastewater had been raised 100% over a two year process and that for the first time in many years the Water Works budget showed a surplus of \$10,000, which would be going into reserve for Water Works projects. He discussed that the operating revenues and operating expenses of the Wastewater budget were now essentially even. He discussed that the Town surplus of \$179,000 would be used to pay the Wastewater loan payments this year instead of having to draw down on the Avon Hall proceeds.

Mr. Aichele discussed that he had been concerned in the past regarding the finances of the Water Works and Wastewater systems but with the rate increases the Water system was now taken care of and the Wastewater system showed promise. He discussed that with the sale of Avon Hall the Town was moving forward in handling the Town's finances in a prudent way.

Mr. Goebel discussed that the budget didn't show any income for real estate transaction but hopefully some money would come in from selling more of the Avon Hall property.

Mayor Sullivan discussed for various reasons the Town had delayed raising the water and sewer rates for many years and had had to play catch up but the Town should not delay future increases if they were needed and it should be committed to making regular increases.

Mr. Schneider discussed that the Council should be looking at a five year plan to include budgeting for any necessary upgrades and increases of operating costs.

Judy deSarno expressed her concerns regarding the need for a new well and asked if the \$10,000 reserve would be going towards the new well.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that there might be grant funds available to get started on the well project and that after having paid down \$2 million on the Wastewater loan and having paid off the Avon Hall loan the Town was now in a better position to get a loan to put in the well or for other projects.

There was a short discussion regarding the well and Mr. Schneider recommended bring in a consultant to evaluate the Water system and starting moving forward on the well and replacing the meters.

Mr. Aichele discussed that he appreciated that the Town was in a better financial position and could be looking and planning for five and ten years down the road. He supported the Mayor's concern that gradual rate increases should be made as needed and not delayed until a large increase was required that would be more of a burden on the citizens.

Mr. Goebel made a motion to authorize and advertise a public hearing on the draft FY 2017-2018 budget on May 10, 2017 and Ms. Kuhn seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Mr. Schneider voted “yes”	Mr. Goebel voted “yes”
Mr. O’Connell voted “yes”	Ms. Leggett voted “yes”
Ms. Kuhn voted “yes”	Mr. Aichele voted “yes”
Mayor Sullivan voted “yes”	

And the motion passed 7-0.

b). Continuation of meeting to April 17, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. to hold a joint work session with the Planning Commission on the Comprehensive Plan:

Mr. Schneider made a motion to continue the meeting to April 17, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. to hold a joint work session with the Planning Commission to review the Comprehensive Plan and Mr. Aichele seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

c). Mayor’s Discretionary Spending Authority: After a short discussion, Mr. Aichele made a motion to increase the Mayor discretionary spending authority from \$750 up to \$2,500 and Mr. O’Connell seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Mr. Schneider voted “yes”	Mr. Goebel voted “yes”
Mr. O’Connell voted “yes”	Ms. Leggett voted “yes”
Ms. Kuhn voted “yes”	Mr. Aichele voted “yes”
Mayor Sullivan voted “yes”	

And the motion passed 7-0.

d). Fidelity Engineering Proposal for Repairs to the Wastewater Plant Generator: After a short discussion Mr. Goebel made a motion to approve \$2,780.19 for repairs to the Wastewater Plant generator and Ms. Leggett seconded and a roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Schneider voted “yes”	Mr. Goebel voted “yes”
Mr. O’Connell voted “yes”	Ms. Leggett voted “yes”
Ms. Kuhn voted “yes”	Mr. Aichele voted “yes”
Mayor Sullivan voted “yes”	

And the motion passed 7-0.

e). Food Pantry Contribution: Mayor Sullivan recommended that the Council approve \$1,750 to the Food Pantry and it had done annually for the last several years.

After a short discussion, Mr. Aichele made a motion to approve up to \$1,750 as a Food Pantry contribution and Mr. Goebel seconded.

Ms. Leggett recommended that the amount be raised to \$2,000 and Mr. Aichele amended his motion to approve up to \$2,000 as a Food Pantry contribution and Mayor Sullivan seconded the amended motion and a roll call vote was taken:

Mr. Aichele voted “yes”	Ms. Kuhn voted “yes”
Ms. Leggett voted “yes”	Mr. O’Connell voted “yes”
Mr. Goebel voted “yes”	Mr. Schneider voted “yes”
Mayor Sullivan voted “yes”	

And the motion passed 7-0.

- PUBLIC FORUM: Mayor Sullivan opened the Public Forum. Sheila Gresinger asked if the Town was actively marketing the Warren Avenue property.  
Mr. Aichele said yes.  
Mr. Comp discussed that the Council had really put the Town in a much better financial situation.  
Sharron Proper discussed that the Warren Avenue property building was in really bad shape and something should be done about it soon.

Mayor Sullivan closed the Public Forum.

- CLOSED SESSION: There was no closed session.
- CONTINUED MEETING: At 9:15 p.m. Mr. Goebel moved to continue the meeting to April 17, 2017 at 10 a.m. to hold a joint work session with the Planning Commission on the Comprehensive Plan and Ms. Kuhn seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

CONTINUED COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON APRIL 17, 2017

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Dodd

Attachments:

Treasurer's report  
Additional Bills to be Paid  
Bills to be Paid  
Draft FY 2017-2018 Budget  
Draft Comprehensive Plan  
Fidelity Engineering Proposal