



Watertown Town Council

Administration Building
149 Main Street
Watertown, MA 02472
Phone: 617-972-6470

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Mark S. Sideris,
Council President

Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr.,
Vice President &
District C Councilor

Caroline Bays
Councilor At Large

Anthony J. Donato,
Councilor At Large

John G. Gannon,
Councilor At Large

Anthony Palomba,
Councilor At Large

Angeline B. Kounelis,
District A Councilor

Lisa J. Feltner,
District B Councilor

Kenneth M. Woodland,
District D Councilor

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2020 AT 7:15 P.M. RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO COUNCIL CHAMBER MINUTES

1. ROLL CALL

Council President Sideris called to order a regular meeting of the Town Council at 7:15 p.m. in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Chamber, Administration Building. Those present were Councilors Caroline Bays, Anthony J. Donato, John G. Gannon, Lisa J. Feltner, Angeline B. Kounelis, Anthony Palomba, Vice President Vincent J. Piccirilli, Jr., Kenneth M. Woodland, and Council President Mark S. Sideris. Also present were Michael J. Driscoll, Town Manager, Attorney Mark Reich, and Marilyn W. Pronovost, Town Council Clerk

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ORGANIZATION

A. Election of the Town Council Vice-President

Councilor Donato moved to nominate Councilor Piccirilli as Vice-President of the Town Council; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. There being no other nominations, the Council voted to adopt the motion unanimously on a voice vote. Councilor Piccirilli thanked the Council for their vote of confidence.

B. Selection of Seating Assignments for Town Council Members

The seating assignments were selected by lottery according to the members' seniority on the Town Council. The seating order going from left to right is Councilor Bays, Councilor Palomba, Councilor Kounelis, Councilor Piccirilli, President Sideris, Councilor Feltner, Councilor Gannon, Councilor Woodland, and Councilor Donato.

C. Adoption of the Current Rules of the Town Council as Temporary Rules of the Town Council

Councilor Piccirilli moved to adopt the current rules of the Town Council as the temporary rules of the Town Council; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

4. PUBLIC FORUM

President Sideris opened the public forum. Councilors Woodland and Gannon recused themselves from this portion of the meeting.

David Cain – 99 Pleasant Street – Stated that there is a telephone pole at 96 Pleasant Street that has been struck a few times in the past. He suggested that a barrier should be installed in front of the pole to avoid such issues in the future.

Kim Charlson – Executive Director of the Perkins School for the Blind Talking and Braille Library, 57 Grandview Street – Stated that the Town was levying a \$1.4 million penalty for the School's failure to file a report regarding its status as a non-profit agency. Such filing would exempt the School from paying property taxes. She asked the Council for some relief so that the School would not have to reduce services.

Patrick Fairbairn – 20 Marcia Road - Stated that the Town needs to make the hiring of a Tree Warden a top administrative priority. Groups such as [Teens for Trees](#) need the guidance of a Tree Warden to further its goals.

Brianna Hume – 122 Chapman Street – a ninth-grader at Watertown High School, urged the hiring of a Tree Warden to help create a vision for urban forestry in the community

David Meshoulam – 49 Oliver Street – Thanked the Council for its support of the Trees for Watertown program and the support of the community. He submitted a [copy of the group's findings](#) and looks forward to continuing this work.

John Ovoian – 18 Carroll Street – Raised concern of the effect of a tax override for the new High School. He suggested the Town spend less to have the school; stop hiring new Town personnel; keep a tight grasp on monies spent; and remove the CPA tax. He would prefer the school to the CPA.

Russ Arico – 49 Fayette Street – Requested that the Town Council spend Town funds responsibly – that they fund needs and not wants and that they should not be influenced by special interest groups. Taxpayers should contact their Councilors to let them know their thoughts.

Jim Loughlin – 465 Arsenal Street – Stated that his basic Comcast services increased by \$7/month. For people on a fixed income this is an imposition. He

asked the Town if it had any influence to do so on behalf of those who must use the service, as there is no alternative.

Libby Shaw – Trees for Watertown – Stated the need for a Tree Warden in order to manage an urban forest as it affects the environment and to provide a vision for an urban forest by expanding current green space and preserving current trees.

Mike Cataruzolo – Works at Perkins School for the Blind in different capacities for many years. He appreciates the accommodations the Town has made for the blind and the disabled and he hopes that the money issues can be resolved to continue the good relationship.

Dave Power – President of Perkins School for the Blind – He urged the Council to accept the School's late filing as a tax exempt institution.

Francesca Baver – 261 Common Street – Spoke on behalf of hiring a Tree Warden with a vision for an urban forest as soon as possible and that this position is not a special interest request but rather a communal special interest need.

Dan Grossman – 25 Hawthorne Street – Over time he has seen an increase in the number of trees on his street that helps to provide shade. He attributes some of the growth to a tree warden who was able to offer advice and assistance. He urged the Town to hire a Tree Warden promptly to continue the services offered.

There being no other speakers, the Public Forum was closed. As an exception, President Sideris made a [statement regarding the matter of the Perkins School for the Blind](#). He stated that due to the failure of Perkins to file for a tax exemption, the Board of Assessors issued a property tax bill for FY 2020. The Town Assessor and Town Attorney met with the School to resolve the matter; however, the Town has not yet heard from Perkins to schedule a follow up meeting. The matter is within the purview of the Assessors' Office and not the Council's, but the Council does urge the Perkins School to schedule a meeting so that the matter may be resolved.

President Sideris requested Mr. Driscoll to make a [statement on behalf of the Administration](#). Mr. Driscoll stated that the Board of Assessors, according to state law issued to the Perkins School a tax on its property, not a penalty, because of the School's failure to file for an exemption. To ameliorate the situation, the Town offered to seek legislation that would abate the FY2020 taxes if the School entered into a PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) Agreement with the Town. The suggested PILOT agreement was a \$240,000 payment for 20 years, 16% of the assessed value of the property, and an annual 2.5% increase. Standard PILOT's in MA are 25% of a property's assessed value.

The Town would like to offer the School the abatement of taxes with a PILOT agreement going forward.

5. EXAMINATION OF RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Minutes of the December 10, 2019 Town Council Meeting

Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the minutes as written; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

6. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A. Committee Assignments of Town Council Members

President announced the [assignment of the Town Council members to their respective Committees](#):

Committee	Chair	Vice-Chair	Secretary
Budget & Fiscal Oversight	Piccirilli	Kounelis	Donato
Economic Development & Planning	Woodland	Feltner	Piccirilli
Education & School Sys Matters	Gannon	Donato	Bays
Humans Services	Palomba	Bays	Gannon
Personnel & Town Organization	Bays	Gannon	Woodland
Public Safety	Feltner	Piccirilli	Kounelis
Public Works	Piccirilli	Donato	Palomba
Rules and Ordinances	Donato	Woodland	Feltner
St., Fed., & Regional Government	Kounelis	Palomba	Feltner

B. Discussion and Action on Moving Forward with the Vacancy on the Library Board of Trustees

President Sideris stated there was a vacancy due to a Trustee moving out of Town. Based on this situation, the Town has the option of calling a special election or the Library Trustees with the Town Council President would be able to appoint a Trustee.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to exercise the option of appointment to fill the vacancy on the Board of Library Trustees; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

President Sideris suggested that anyone interested in the position, which is for four years, should contact him or the Town Council Clerk.

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public Hearing and Vote on a Proposed Ordinance Amending Title IX of the Watertown Code of Ordinances, Business Regulations, Chapter 116, [Bring Your Own Bottle Regulations](#), §116.03, General Rules, by Reducing the Cost of the Required Permit from \$1,000 to \$300

Mr. Driscoll stated that the BYOB (Bring Your Own Bottle) Ordinance was adopted in September 2015 and in March 2017, it was recommended that the

cost of the permit would be reduced from \$1,000 to \$300; however, the First Reading was never completed. Since then, the legal ad has been placed and the matter is open for a public hearing.

President Sideris opened the Public Hearing; there being no speakers, he closed the Public Hearing. Councilor Piccirilli moved to adopt the proposed ordinance amending Title IX of the Watertown Code of Ordinances, Business Regulations, Chapter 116, Bring Your Own Bottle Regulations, §116.03, General Rules, by reducing the cost of the required permit from \$1,000 to \$300; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

8. MOTIONS, ORDINANCES, ORDER, AND RESOLUTIONS

Resolution Authorizing a Transfer of \$19,000 from the Fiscal Year 2020 Town Council Reserve to the Town Manager Prior Year Full Salaries Account and the Fiscal Year 2020 [Town Manager Full Time Salaries](#) Account to Reflect the Adopted Ordinance Amending the Fiscal Year 2019 Compensation of the Town Manager

President Sideris stated that on December 10, 2019, the Town Council amended the Ordinance regarding the Town Manager's Salary and that the matter before the Council was to fund that change. Councilor Piccirilli moved to authorize a transfer of \$19,000 from the Fiscal Year 2020 Town Council Reserve to the Town Manager Prior Year Full Salaries Account and the Fiscal Year 2020 Town Manager Full Time Salaries Account to reflect the adopted ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2019 compensation of the Town Manager; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a roll call vote.

9. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

A. Committee on Education and School System Matters Report Regarding the [Membership of the Board of Directors of the Cable Access Corporation](#) – Susan G. Falkoff, Chair

ACTION ITEMS:

1. That the Town Council Confirm the Appointment of Ninos Hanna to the Board of Directors of the Cable Access Corporation for a Term to Expire on September 15, 2022
2. That the Town Council Confirm the Reappointment of John M. Airasian to the Board of Directors of the Cable Access Corporation for a Term to Expire on September 15, 2022
3. That the Town Council Confirm the Reappointment of Christopher Mackenzie to the Board of Directors of the Cable Access Corporation for a Term to Expire on September 15, 2021
4. That the Town Council Confirm the Appointment of Laurie McManus to the Board of Directors of the Cable Access Corporation for a Term to Expire on September 15, 2021

Councilor Donato read the Committee Report. Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the report as read; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

Councilor Piccirilli moved for the Town Council to confirm the appointment of Ninos Hanna to the Board of Directors of the Cable Access Corporation for a term to expire on September 15, 2022; Councilor Palomba seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

Councilor Piccirilli moved for the Town Council to confirm the reappointment of John M. Airasian to the Board of Directors of the Cable Access Corporation for a term to expire on September 15, 2022; Councilor Palomba seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

Councilor Piccirilli moved for the Town Council to confirm the reappointment of Christopher Mackenzie to the Board of Directors of the Cable Access Corporation for a term to expire on September 15, 2021; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

Councilor Piccirilli moved for the Town Council to confirm the appointment of Laurie McManus to the Board of Directors of the Cable Access Corporation for a term to expire on September 15, 2021; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

B. Committee on Economic Development and Planning Report Regarding Recommendations on the [Adult Use Marijuana Applications](#) – Kenneth Woodland, Chair

Councilor Woodland read the Committee Report. Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the report as read; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

C. Committee on Human Services Report Regarding the Committee's Work on [Affordable Housing and to Consider Next Steps](#) – Anthony Palomba, Chair

Councilor Bays read the Committee Report. Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the report as read; Councilor Palomba seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

- D. Committee on Media and Public Outreach Report Regarding an [Evaluation of the Community Engagement Project and a Review of Findings](#) – Anthony Palomba, Chair

Councilor Feltner read the Committee Report. Councilor Piccirilli moved to accept the report as read; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

10. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Referral to the Committee on Rules and Ordinances to Review the Town Council Rules

Councilor Piccirilli moved to refer to the Committee on Rules and Ordinances the matter of reviewing the Town Council Rules; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

- B. Referral to the Committee on Rules and Ordinances Consideration of the Acceptance of Clause 22G of Chapter 59 Section 5 Concerning Veteran Exemptions

Councilor Piccirilli moved to refer to the Committee on Rules and Ordinances the consideration of the acceptance of Clause 22G of Chapter 59 Section 5 concerning veteran exemptions; Councilor Woodland seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

- C. Referral to Public Works Committee To Perform a Cost/Benefit Analysis on Organic and Inorganic Waste Recycling and to Develop Policy Guidance for the Town Council to Approve with Consideration Given to Establishing a Volunteer Advisory Committee to Advise the Town Council

Councilor Piccirilli moved to refer to the Public Works Committee a request to perform a cost/benefit analysis on organic and inorganic waste recycling and to develop policy guidance for the Town Council to approve with consideration given to establishing a volunteer advisory committee to advise the Town Council with the friendly amendment that the phrase “with consideration given to establishing a volunteer advisory committee to advise the Town Council” be deleted; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion.

During the discussion, it was suggested that the topic of the cost/benefit analysis and the policy guidance be separated into two tasks. It was noted that the motion states with consideration for an advisory committee and was not a requirement. Councilors Piccirilli and Feltner withdrew their motion. Councilor Piccirilli moved to refer to the Public Works Committee a request to perform a cost/benefit analysis on organic and inorganic waste recycling

and to develop policy guidance for the Town Council to approve with consideration given to establishing a volunteer advisory committee and deleting the phrase “to advise the Town Council”; Councilor Palomba seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote.

President Sideris stated that he would be bringing up a referral at the next meeting regarding communication he received from the Environment and Energy Efficiency Committee regarding Transportation issues.

Councilor Feltner stated that she hoped the Town Administration with the guidance of the Council President could have an amicable discussion regarding the Perkins School for the Blind. President Sideris stated that this is a matter within the purview of the Board of Assessors and that the Town Council is not involved in this matter. The Council was advised by the Town Attorney that it may make a statement or provide an opinion on the matter. Councilors Woodland and Gannon recused themselves from this discussion.

11. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

The Town Manager had no matters to review.

12. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION/REVIEW OF LIST OF PENDING MATTERS

Councilor Kounelis requested that the Town Manager and Town Council President provide members with the presentation.

Councilor Feltner requested to know what policies or practices the Town has in place for [payment in lieu of taxes](#).

Councilor Palomba requested information as to why the [Watertown Connector shuttle](#) will not be used by the public on the Arsenal Street Corridor as has been discussed for a long time.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Feltner stated that she hoped the Town could focus on the relationships within the community and that they could be strengthened.

Councilor Woodland announced that on January 29, 2020, there would be a meeting with the developer at the Watertown High School regarding the development in the West End that affects those especially in Precinct 10.

Councilor Bays announced that on Monday, January 20, 2020, the Watertown Unity Breakfast would be held at 8:30 am at the Hellenic Center on 25 Bigelow Avenue to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Councilor Gannon announced that on Tuesday, January 21, 2020, there would be a public meeting regarding the Watertown High School Building. He urged all to attend.

President Sideris announced that six members of the public would be appointed to the Charter Review Commission. If anyone is interested in serving they should notify him or the Town Council Clerk. This matter would remain open until the end of the month. He stated he would interview each person that requests the appointment.

He also stated that on January 29, 2020, the CPA (Community Preservation Act) Committee would be meeting at 7:00 p.m. at the Tufts Health Plan building. All are invited to state their opinion on the matters relating to the Committee's charge.

President Sideris announced that on January 23, 2020, at 6:30 pm in the Watertown Savings Bank Room in the Watertown Free Public Library, a Watertown Hazards Public Meeting would be held to discuss actions to be taken due to climate change.

14. PUBLIC FORUM

David Cain – 99 Pleasant Street – Stated that the cost of organic recycling may not cost a lot to accomplish.

15. RECESS OR ADJOURNMENT

President Sideris asked for a moment of silence in memory of Councilor Kounelis's mother.

Councilor Piccirilli moved to adjourn the meeting; Councilor Feltner seconded the motion. The motion was adopted unanimously on a voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

ADDENDUM

I hereby certify that at a regular meeting of the Town Council for which a quorum was present, the above minutes were adopted by a vote of 9 for, 0 against, 0 present on January 28, 2020.

Mark S. Sideris, Council President
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**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2020 AT 7:15 P.M.
RICHARD E. MASTRANGELO COUNCIL CHAMBER
LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

1. Statement Regarding the Need to Hire a Tree Warden – Patrick Fairbairn – January 14, 2020 – Item 4
2. Final Report: Trees for Watertown’s Teens for Trees Program – Summer 2019 – Item 4
3. Statement Regarding Perkins School for the Blind – Mark S. Sideris, Council President – January 14, 2020 – Item 4
4. Statement on Behalf of the Town Administration Regarding the Perkins School for the Blind – Michael Driscoll, Town Manager –Item 4
5. Minutes of the December 10, 2019 Town Council Meeting – Item 5
6. 2020-2021 Committee Assignments – January 14, 2020 – Item 6A
7. An Ordinance Amending the “Bring Your Own Bottle Regulations” Ordinance by Reducing the Required Permit Fee – Item 7
8. Agenda Item – Transfer of Funds Request Regarding the Compensation of the Town Manager - Michael Driscoll, Town Manager, to Town Council – January 8, 2020 – Item 8
9. Committee on Education and School System Matters Regarding the Re/Appointments to the Board of Directors of the Cable Access Corporation – Susan G. Falkoff, Chair – December 17, 2019 – Item 9A
10. Committee on Economic Development and Planning Report Regarding the Discussion and Recommendations on Adult Use Marijuana Applications – Kenneth M. Woodland, Chair – December 12, 2019 – Item 9B
 - A. Sign-In Sheet
 - B. Adult Use Marijuana Applications – Steve Magoon, DCDP Director, Assistant Town Manager, to Town Council and Michael Driscoll, Town Manager – December 10, 2019
 - C. Map of Proposed Adult Use Marijuana Applications
 - D. Keltic, Keltic Green Inc. Application for Consideration, Licensed Marijuana Retail Establishment, 390 Arsenal Street, Watertown, MA – November 15, 2019
 - E. Eskar – Watertown Marijuana Retail Submission – 48 North Beacon Street – November 7, 2019
 - F. Optima Wellness, LLC Application for Marijuana Establishment – November 15, 2019
 - G. Application for Host Community Agreement to Town of Watertown, Bud’s Goods and Provisions, Corp., 330-350 Pleasant Street, Watertown, MA – October 15, 2019

11. Committee on Human Services Report Regarding a Review of the Committee's Work on Affordable Housing and to Consider Next Steps – Anthony Palomba, Chair – December 5, 2019 – Item 9C
12. Committee on Media and Public Outreach Report Regarding an Evaluation of the Community Engagement Project a Review of the Findings of the October 23, 2019 Meeting – Anthony Palomba, Chair – Item 9D
13. Request for Information Regarding the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program – Councilor Lisa Feltner – January 14, 2020 – Item 12
14. Request for Information Regarding Access to the Watertown Connector Shuttle – Councilor Anthony Palomba – January 14, 2020 – Item 12