

**MONROE TOWN COUNCIL  
Monroe, Connecticut  
FINAL MEETING MINUTES**

**May 28, 2013 – 8:00 PM – Council Chambers**

**Present:** Chairman Enid Lipeles  
Vice Chairman Deborah Heim  
Councilmember Debra Dutches  
Councilmember Nick Kapoor  
Councilmember Raymond Knapp, Jr.  
Councilmember Frank Lieto  
Councilmember Dee Dee Martin  
Councilmember J.P. Sredzinski  
Councilmember Tony Unger

**ABSENT:** First Selectman Stephen J. Vavrek

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A regular meeting of the Monroe Town Council was held on Tuesday, May 28, 2013 at 8:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Monroe Town Hall.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

Motion to approve the minutes and voting record of the regular meeting held on May 13, 2013 (Session 2013-09).

**Reappointments**

Cathy Kohut (R) of 20 Easton Road to the Inland Wetlands Commission for a term ending February 24, 2017.

Gary Scrofani (R) of 117 Old Castle Drive to the Board of Police Commissioners for a term ending May 16, 2016.

The Consent Calendar was passed unanimously to the May 13, 2013 Town Council Meeting.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Correspondence from the Commission on Aging to the First Selectman, Town Council Chair and Town Council Vice-Chair dated May 15, 2013 regarding Rental of Senior Center.

Correspondence from Town Attorney John P. Fracassini to the First Selectman and Town Council Chairwoman dated May 20, 2013 regarding Fire Department Apparatus Purchase/Monroe Volunteer Fire Department No. 1 Inc.

Agenda for Joint Meeting of the Board of Education, Board of Finance and Town Council scheduled for Monday, June 10, 2013 at 7:00 PM.

Memo from the First Selectman to Town Council Chair dated May 23, 2013 regarding OPM JAG Formula Grant Award \$14,909.00.

Memo from the First Selectman to Town Council Chair dated May 23, 2013 regarding OPM JAG Formula Grant Award \$17,499.00.

Memo from the First Selectman to Town Council Chair dated May 23, 2013 regarding OPM JAG Formula Grant Award \$46,531.00.

Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated May 23, 2013 regarding an appointment to the Architectural Review Board.

Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated May 23, 2013 regarding an appointment to the Commission on Aging.

Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated May 23, 2013 regarding a re-appointment to the Board of Police Commissioners.

Memo from the First Selectman to the Town Council Chair dated May 23, 2013 regarding a re-appointment to the Inland Wetlands Commission.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

*Diane Czerniawski, 16 Clydesdale Court* spoke about her concerns with the conditions of the EMS building located at the 54 Jockey Hollow Road facility (Station #2). She stated in January 2011, the building that houses EMS volunteers was brought to the attention of the First Selectman and they asked for a resolution to the problems. She noted it is now May, 2013 and the roof is leaking very badly with pots and pans catching the rainwater. Ms. Czerniawski also noted the condition of the building is just unacceptable and she brought in pictures for the Council to view. She came tonight to ask for help to resolve this situation since Chalk Hill is no longer available to use.

*Ann Marie LaGuardia, 15 Pastors Walk, (EMS volunteer)* stated she was hoping to see more families volunteer with the EMS, but with the conditions of the building there is just no room to house people in the building. She is hoping there is another building in town to accommodate the EMS.

*Marsha Fitzgibbons, 15 Weathervane Hill, (EMS volunteer)* stated she will be sleeping in a day room on a couch and is hoping "critters" will not be crawling through or getting wet from the rain dripping down. She noted she just wanted to get a decent sleep in this building when volunteering overnight and it has become very difficult.

*Brian Wallace, 4 Pebble Road, (EMS volunteer)* stated he is an overnight shift person for the EMS and he has suffered from pneumonia, bronchitis, and respiratory illnesses during his stays overnight in the building.

*Christine Solowski, Jockey Hollow Road, (EMS volunteer)* stated she chooses not to sleep in the building due to suffering from severe allergies. She stated volunteers sleep in cars and on couches, and she hopes to get a building soon.

*John Brenna, 5 Lanthorne Road, (EMS volunteer)* stated he has visited many facilities that house EMS volunteers and they are very nice. He noted with the number of calls they receive, a better facility is needed.

*Steven Shiskin, 23 Ridgewood Drive, (EMS volunteer)* stated with the deplorable conditions of the building, it is very embarrassing to have Boy and Girl Scout troops tour the facilities. He stressed the need to do something as the volunteers work 24-7.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

### **Motion: (D. Heim)**

To approve the appointment of Nakia Dube (R) of 117 Ripton Ridge to the Architectural Review Board for a term ending December 5, 2014.

### **Second: (N. Kapoor)**

**Discussion:** Nakia has lived in Monroe for 5 years. He lives here with his wife and three, going on four girls. He is originally from Danbury and graduated from Danbury High School. Shortly after high school he pursued a career as an electrician. He has completed his E1 certification as an Electrical Contractor and has been working in the field for about 10 years. After working for a company for 7 years, he and his wife decided to branch out starting Precision Electric LLC in construction projects both residential and commercial, mostly in the Fairfield County area. In his free time, Nakia enjoys playing golf and going to the shooting range. He spends time with his growing family and friends. He thoroughly enjoys vacations away from the business in places like the Outer Banks, NC and Florida. His experience in the field will be an asset to the Architectural Review Board when making decisions for the future of Monroe. This appointment replaces the vacancy created by Michael Vitello.

### **Motion passed 9-0**

### **Motion: (D. Heim)**

To approve the appointment of Veronica Condon (R) of 9 Stable Ridge Road to the Commission on Aging for a term ending July 2, 2016.

### **Second: (T. Unger)**

**Discussion:** Veronica has lived in Monroe for the past 19 years. She is a graduate of Providence College and is currently employed by the Monroe Board of Education as a paraprofessional. She is a member of the Monroe Women's Club, St Jude's Columbiettes and St. Jude Prayer Ministry.

She is the former coordinator of the Levittown, New York Senior Center, the Geriatric Assessment Coordinator for Alexandria Hospital in Virginia and served on the Alexandria, Virginia Commission on Aging. Her very relevant experience will make Veronica a valuable member of the Commission on Aging. The appointment replaces the vacancy created by Ines Posada.

Councilmember Unger stated he has known Ms. Condon for 15 years and stated she will make an excellent addition.

**Motion passed 9-0**

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### ***Town Council Committee on Finance, Education, Health & Public Safety Matters***

Vice Chairman Heim reported they have not met but did attend the Board of Finance meeting and discussed the mil rate. The next scheduled meeting will be June 10, 2013. Councilmember Dutches reported a meeting was held with the Board of Education and stated there is a pension committee and a new capstone program with 200 community members involved in this program. She also noted James Agostine, Superintendent of Schools asked the First Selectman to take charge of the Ad Hoc committee.

#### ***Town Council Committee on Planning & Zoning, Public Works and Parks & Recreation Matters***

Councilmember Unger reported they met tonight and discussed the Monroe Farmer's Market and requirements. He stated the market is on town property and the town pays some bills for the farmers market. He noted there does not appear to be any discrimination against people and the plan is to move forward and review this further. Councilmember Unger stated they will see if any elected official should be on the farmers market. He also noted there were concerns about doing a building study as the roofs on the school buildings need repair, and he would also include EMS in this building study. Councilmember Dutches felt monies should be spent on facilities study reserve fund.

#### ***Town Council Committee on Legislative & Administrative Matters***

Councilmember Sredzinski reported a discussion was done on the senior tax relief and inland/wetland ordinance in great detail. He noted a minor discussion was done on the Youth Commission. The next scheduled meeting has not been set. Councilmember Martin wanted to clarify the agreement on the inland/wetland ordinance. She stated the ordinance did not come out with a full agreement as there were some differences of opinions. She noted the agreement was to bring it to the full Council.

#### ***Trumbull/Monroe Health District***

Councilmember Knapp reported they have not met and has no communication. The next meeting is scheduled in a month.

#### ***First Selectman Update***

First Selectman Vavrek was on vacation, therefore he was absent tonight.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### **Fire Cistern Grant status report**

Vida Stone, Administrative Assistant to the First Selectman was present and stated the grant was extended to December, 2013. She noted Fire Marshall, Bill Davin and Chris Nowacki, Department of Public Works will be following through on this matter.

#### **Amendment to the Agreement for the Use and Occupancy of Chalk Hill by the Town of Newtown, the Newtown Board of Education and the Town of Monroe.**

**No Vote**

**Chairman Lipeles called for a 15 minute recess at 8:36 P.M.**

**Chairman Lipeles called meeting to order at 8:51 P.M.**

#### **Amendment to the Agreement for the Use and Occupancy of Chalk Hill by the Town of Newtown, the Newtown Board of Education and the Town of Monroe.**

Town Attorney, John Fracassini was present and stated he has had many meetings and phone conversations with Pat Llodra, First Selectman of Newtown. He noted the Newtown town officials would like to meet with the Monroe town officials. He noted the policies regarding parks and recreation and when they can get the building back is not feasible right now. He is hoping to get more information with his meeting with the Superintendent of Education. Councilmember Dutches feels the meeting with both town officials will be advantageous. She would like to see contracts drawn up, as the current contract says June 20, 2013. The agreement, Frank Cooper, Director of Parks and Recreation received, was to be allowed in the building by July 2013. Councilmember Dutches requested everything in writing as we are asking for space in Chalk Hill. Councilmember Lieto felt there are many questions to be discussed. Attorney Fracassini felt we need to come back with a document to vote on and wanted some guidance on the negotiations.

#### **AMEND AGENDA**

**Motion: (E. Lipeles)**

To call for an Executive Session after 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Participation to discuss the amendment to the Agreement for the Use and Occupancy of Chalk Hill by the Town of Newtown, the Newtown Board of Education and the Town of Monroe.

**Second: (T. Unger)**

**Motion passes 9-0**

#### **Reconsideration of Fire Department Equipment Expenditures - No Vote**

#### **AMEND AGENDA**

**Motion: (E. Lipeles)**

To amend the agenda and add an Update on the Police Department renovations under Unfinished Business.

**Second: (N. Kapoor)**

**Motion passes 9-0**

#### **Update on Police Department Renovations**

Councilmember Sredzinski gave an update to the Police Department renovations and stated most of the construction is done with paving and patching near completion. He stated new lighting is being installed now and a dumbwaiter needs to be constructed before the elevator is put in. He also noted everything is still within the budget.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **OPM JAG Formula Grant Award \$14,909.00**

**Motion: (D. Heim)**

BE IT RESOLVED, that Stephen J. Vavrek, First Selectman is hereby authorized to execute the agreement on behalf of the Town of Monroe with the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management for the federal Justice Assistance Formula Grant Program in the amount of \$14,909.00.

**Second: (E. Lipeles)**

**Discussion:** Vice-Chairman Heim stated this will be used to purchase and install equipment and technology for use by law enforcement agencies in response to the Newtown Shooting and aftermath.

**Motion passed 9-0**

#### **OPM JAG Formula Grant Award \$17,499.00**

**Motion: (D. Heim)**

BE IT RESOLVED, that Stephen J. Vavrek, First Selectman is hereby authorized to execute the agreement on behalf of the Town of Monroe with the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management for the federal Justice Assistance Formula Grant Program in the amount of \$17,499.00.

**Second: (T. Unger)**

**Discussion:** Vice Chairman Heim stated this will be used to purchase and install equipment and technology for use by law enforcement agencies in response to the Newtown Shooting and aftermath.

**Motion passed 9-0**

### **OPM JAG Formula Grant Award \$46,531.00**

#### **Motion: (D. Heim)**

BE IT RESOLVED, that Stephen J. Vavrek, First Selectman is hereby authorized to execute the agreement on behalf of the Town of Monroe with the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management for the federal Justice Assistance Formula Grant Program in the amount of \$46,531.00.

#### **Second: (T. Unger)**

**Discussion:** Vice Chairman Heim stated this will be used to purchase and install equipment and technology for use by law enforcement agencies in response to the Newtown Shooting and aftermath.

**Motion passed 9-0**

### **Inland Wetland Fine Ordinance (call for public hearing on June 10, 2013 at 7:45 PM)**

Councilmember Sredzinski stated there were some significant changes on the Inland Wetland Fine Ordinance. He stated a minor change to the section on Fine and Payment and Period for uncontested payment of fines was made. Chairman Lipeles called for a public hearing on June 10, 2013 with new time change at 6:45 p.m. for discussion.

### **Heart Safe Application**

Margaret Brenna, Monroe VEMS Training Coordinator was present and stated their goal is to improve the odds of survival of people who suffer cardiac death. She would like to reduce this by 10%-20%. A five step program is being introduced to improve awareness such as to continue low cost community CPR/AED training classes on a quarterly basis, offer CPR/AED demonstrations for local businesses and civic organizations to encourage purchases of AEDs and appropriate training, offer low cost CPR/AED training for local businesses purchasing AEDs for their locations, organize Hands for Life mass CPR/AED program in the community, and work toward goals of making CPR/AED training a requirement for Masuk H.S. graduation. Ms. Brenna feels the programs are very important to survive and she wants Monroe to be a safe place to be for cardiac issues. She also noted the application has been accepted and would like this to be a celebration to the town.

Councilmember Unger praised Ms. Brenna for all her hard work and dedication and understands the population is growing for senior citizens.

### **Recording System for Town Council Meetings**

Vida Stone, Administrative Assistant to the First Selectman stated our recording system is old and due to the recent upgrade, the equipment used by the Town Council Clerk to record and transcribe the minutes is not working now. She stated we may be looking at a \$3,000-\$4,000 investment for a new recording system. Councilmember Martin wanted to know why Council was not informed this may happen when the upgrade was done. Councilmember Sredzinski suggested using a tablet; perhaps it may be less money. Councilmember Dutches suggested meeting with the Technology Department.

### **Senior Center Use Policy (refer to sub-committee for review)**

Vice-Chairman Heim stated the Senior Center Use Policy will be referred to sub-committee for review.

## **2<sup>ND</sup> PARTICIPATION**

*Steve Kirsch, 35 Applegate Lane* stated he did not wish to see Town Council go into Executive Session on the Amendment to the Agreement for the Use and Occupancy of Chalk Hill by the Town of Newtown, the Newtown Board of Education and the Town of Monroe. He feels a discussion would benefit the public as all would like to hear what is going on with the schools.

*Jake Kara, Monroe Courier reporter* felt there was no reason to go into an Executive Session on the Amendment to the Agreement for the Use and Occupancy of Chalk Hill by the Town of Newtown, the Newtown Board of Education and the Town of Monroe. He stated it limits his abilities to report on the issues at hand and he feels this is very frustrating.

*MariAn Gail Brown, Connecticut Post reporter* stated she also echoes Mr. Kirsch's statement and feels Town Council could do the public a real service by communicating questions and discuss them on the record.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Motion: (E. Lipeles)**

To go into Executive Session at 9:50 p.m. for the purpose of discussing the Amendment to the Agreement for the Use and Occupancy of Chalk Hill by the Town of Newtown, the Newtown Board of Education and the Town of Monroe.

**AMEND MOTION EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Motion: (J.P. Sredzinski)**

To amend the motion to go into Executive Session at 9:50 p.m. for the purpose of discussing the Amendment to the Agreement for the Use and Occupancy of Chalk Hill by the Town of Newtown, the Newtown Board of Education and the Town of Monroe and to invite Town Attorney, John Fracassini, and Police Chief, John Salvatore.

**Second: (D. Martin)**

**Motion passes 9-0**

Returned to Open Session at 10:50 p.m.

**Motion: (E. Lipeles)**

Town Council authorized the Town Attorney to finalize a negotiation agreement with the Town of Newtown regarding use of the Chalk Hill building used by Sandy Hook Elementary School.

**Second: (T. Unger)**

**Motion passed 9-0**

*Next Town Council Meeting will be scheduled on June 10, 2013.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion: (E. Lipeles)**

To adjourn the meeting at 10:55 p.m.

**Second: (R. Knapp)**

**Motion passed 9-0**

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Cerreta  
Town Council Clerk