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REGULAR MEETING-MASFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
APRIL 24, 2006

Mayor Elizabeth Paterson called the regular meeting of the Mansfield Town Council to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Audrey P. Beck Building.

I. ROLL CALL

- Present: Blair, Clouette Haddad, Hawkins, Koehn, Paterson, Paulhus (until 10:30 p.m.), Redding, Schaefer

- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Mr. Clouette moved to approve the minutes of the April 3rd special meeting as corrected, seconded by Mr. Hawkins the motion passed.

Mr. Clouette moved to approve the minutes of the April 5th special meeting, seconded by Mr. Hawkins the motion passed with Ms. Blair abstaining.

Mr. Clouette moved to approve the minutes of the April 10th special meeting as corrected, seconded by Mr. Hawkins the motion passed with Ms. Redding abstaining.

Mr. Clouette moved to approve the minutes of the April 10th regular meeting, seconded by Mr. Hawkins the motion passed with Ms. Redding abstaining.

Mr. Clouette moved to approve the minutes of the April 17th special meeting, as corrected, seconded by Mr. Hawkins the motion passed with Mr. Haddad abstaining.

Mr. Clouette moved to approve the minutes of the April 19th special meeting, seconded by Mr. Hawkins the motion passed.

- III. MOMENT OF SILENCE

- Mayor Paterson requested a moment of silence in recognition of our troops serving abroad.

IV. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

- Richard Pellegrine observed that Spring Weekend went smoothly and was impressed that the Police were enforcing the open container ordinance. He also requested that the Town Council consider moving District 3 voting back to Southeast School.

Richard DeBoer requested more bus stops on Route 195 and asked that the Council also consider water and sewer lines in this area.

2. Mayor Paterson asked the Council to join her in the front of the room for the reading and presentation of the Proclamation in Honor of the Mansfield Middle School Clean Energy Team. The members of the team, Nick Briere, Nic Dinsmore, Justin Enis and Chad Vincente were acknowledged and thanked for

their work.

V. PUBLIC HEARING

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Mayor Paterson called the public hearing on the proposed Housing Code for the Town of Mansfield to order at 7:45 p.m. Matt Hart, Acting Town Manager, and Michael Ninteau, Building Official, presented an overview of the ordinance including a new effective date and an amendment that allows staff to revoke a certificate if a dwelling falls out of compliance.

Tom Callahan, Special Assistant to the President of the University of Connecticut, applauded the effort to enact effective protection for the people who rent the properties and for those who are their neighbors.

Jim Knox, 148 Birch Road, complimented the Council on addressing the housing issue and requested they investigate the four people per house rule. He asked if perhaps a written procedure establishing the number of occupants in a house could be established.

Ken Gankofskie, 112 Hillyndale Road, would like to see the proposed code be self-funded. He suggested perhaps an increase in the fees or a renter's impact fee be established.

John Mihalopoulos, Hunting Lodge Road, stated that he tries to maintain his property and would like suggestions from the Town Council on how to educate student so that they are not destructive.

Pat Hempel, 28 Holly Drive, noted that she was on PZC during the hearings for Celeron Square and they were told that property values in the area would increase. They have not and she sees a similar situation developing on Hanks Hill Road.

Colin Brennan, a member of the Undergraduate Student Government, speaking on behalf of the Recommendations subcommittee of the Mansfield Community Campus Partnership expressed support for the concept. He stated that the housing code is a necessary measure to improve the quality of life in Mansfield and create a cohesive community.

Laura Sharpe, Deputy Advisor of Town Affairs for the Undergraduate Student Government and a member of the Recommendations Committee, supports the code and thinks it will be helpful to students and residents alike.

Jane Howard, 138 Hillyndale Road, supports the concept but feels that the fees may be too low and questioned why parking issues and weeds were not included in the code. She also questioned whether or not septic systems would be addressed in this code.

Robert Coughlin, 49 Storrs Heights Road, wondered if it would be possible to have the certificates identify the names of the renters and for the town to keep a copy of the rental contracts on file. He supports the housing code.

Christopher Kueffner, 192 Ravine Road, suggested that maybe the real issues at stake are those of aesthetics and behavior and wonders if the approach the town is taking will address those. He suggested that the Council start more slowly to see if the approach works.

Thomas Tavar, 1012 Storrs Road, made the following comments: the fees will be passed to the lessee, rental landlords do not usually make use of the schools and other public services in town, and that the code groups both single family and multifamily zones under the same regulations. He also suggested that the number of bedrooms should determine the number of people allowed to inhabit a house.

Julie Bell Elkins, Assistant Dean of Students, stated that she was surprised by the intense feelings on the part of the students regarding problems with their landlords. She also stated that the students need the skills to become good neighbors. The Town and the University are working together to define the expectations of the students and landlords and are helping the students develop those skills needed to be good neighbors. She stated that one of the missions of a public institution such as the University is to make their students better citizens.

William Jordan, 243 South Eagleville Road, complimented the Council on their efforts. He noted that property value is more than money; it is being able to look out your window and see another valued property.

Karen Ann Lipinski, 506 A Stafford Road, suggested landlord training and requested that requiring a 10- year lithium battery for tamper resistant smoke detectors would be helpful.

Brian Malachowsky, a member of the Campus Community Partnership and University Student Government, lamented that students have no one to go to when there is a problem with their housing. The students are supportive of an Office of Off Campus Student Services to help with housing issues. He hopes that the town will do their part.

David Ferrero, 91 Depot Road, stated that he is thinking of renting a room in his house and wanted to know how the code would apply to him.

Richard Pellegrine, 269 Clover Mill Road, mentioned that he has heard of students being exploited by landlords. He is also bothered by the reports of student damage in houses that landowners are trying to maintain. He believes that once a student rents an off campus house he/she is no longer a university student for that purpose and should be treated like any other citizen.

Gaye Needy, questioned whether or not the staff would be licensed or does the landlord need to provide a licensed professional for the inspection.

Philip Richard, 506 Stafford Road, also questioned the need for a licensed individual to do the inspection.

Richard De Boer, 62 Blacksmith Road, thinks that density is the problem in the campus area and requested more buses and water lines in other parts of town.

Theodore Panagopoulos, Vernon, CT, asked who is responsible when the renters destroy his property. He stated that he tries to keep his houses maintained but it is difficult.

Mayor Paterson closed the hearing at 9:30 p.m. She noted that if the Council passes the ordinance tonight it will take affect July 1, 2006.

- VI. OLD BUSINESS

- 3. Housing Code for the Town of Mansfield

Mr. Clouette moved to adopt the Ordinance for Adoption of the International Property Maintenance Code, a Housing Code for the Town of Mansfield, as presented by staff its draft dated April 24, 2006, and which ordinance shall become effective on July 1, 2006. Mr. Schaefer seconded the motion.

Mr. Hawkins offered, in a friendly amendment, to add the following: After the issuance of a certificate, if, upon reinspections pursuant to this code, it is determined by the code official that the dwelling or dwelling unit is no longer in substantial compliance with this code, the certificate may be revoked by the code official in writing stating the reasons for the revocation. The addition was accepted.

Mr. Clouette stated his concern that the issues of water, parking and septic are not fully addressed. Mr. Ninteau, Building Official, commented that there is a provision that allows the housing official to deny the certificate if there are any concern regarding water and septic. A discussion regarding the violation and fine procedures, the testing of water, room size, fees and rubbish disposal ensued.

Mr. Hawkins and Ms. Koehn seconded to move to table the motion until the next regular meeting on May 8, 2006.

In favor: Ms. Blair, Mr. Haddad, Mr. Hawkins, Ms. Koehn, Mr. Paulhus, Ms. Redding

Against: Mr. Clouette, Ms. Paterson

Abstaining: Mr. Schaefer.

The motion passed.

4. Fenton River

5. Campus/Community Relations

Mayor Paterson recognized Fire Chief Dave Dagon and District Chief William Jordan who presented a preliminary report on Spring Weekend. They reported a remarkable degree of coordination and felt that the overall approach was very successful. Council members relayed their experiences noting that the underlying problems should continue to be addressed.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

6. Appointment of Town Council Designee to Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Inc

Mr. Clouette moved and Ms. Koehn seconded, effective April 24, 2006, to appoint Council member Alan Hawkins to a three-year term commencing on July 1, 2006 and expiring on June 30, 2009, to the Board of Directors of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Inc.

Motion so passed

7. Appointment of Auditor to Conduct Financial Audit for Fiscal Year 2005/2006

Mr. Haddad moved and Mr. Hawkins seconded, effective April 24, 2006, to refer this item to the Finance Committee for their recommendation.

Motion so passed.

8. Transfer of Uncollected Taxes to Suspense Tax Book

Mr. Schaefer moved and Mr. Hawkins seconded, effective April 24, 2006, to transfer \$34,019.39 in uncollected property taxes to the Mansfield Property Tax Suspense Book, as recommended by the Collector of Revenue.

Motion so passed.

9. WINCOG Region Enhancement Grant – Confirmation of Local Match Support

Mr. Haddad resolved, by the Town Council of the Town of Mansfield to accept the Federal Transportation Grant Funds for the Downtown Streetscape Project in the amount of approximately \$1,173,000 and to provide the local 20-percent match at the appropriate time as required by the Department of Transportation's funding guidelines. Furthermore, as previously provided and approved by the Town Council in its 2002 action to apply for this grant, the Council hereby reconfirms its commitment to operate and to maintain the facilities constructed by this grant.

Seconded by Mr. Hawkins, the motion passed.

10. Safe Roads to School Grant Application

Ms. Koehn moved and Mr. Hawkins seconded, effective April 24, 2006, to authorize the Director of Public Works to submit the attached application seeking \$422,120 in funding from the Federal Safe Roads to Schools Program.

Motion so passed.

11. An Ordinance Regulating Cats

Matt Hart, Acting Town Manager, stated that additional work needs to be done on the ordinance and that it will be presented at the next meeting.

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VIII. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

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IX. REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

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X. REPORTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

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XI. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

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Matt Hart, Acting Town Manager, announced the Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 9, 2006.

Mr. Hart announced that the Charter Revision Commission would hold its first meeting on April 25, 2006 at 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Hart reported that he has received correspondence indicating that the University supports the concept of an assisted/independent living facility and would be willing to negotiate the particulars.

Mr. Hart noted that the town was recently honored as one of the first towns to receive the Connecticut Clean Energy Communities Award. Ms. Koehn reported that the first Conservation Workshop was held last Saturday.

Mr. Hart announced the "Tour de Mansfield, Village by Village" bike ride.

Mr. Hart reported the staff is still researching the details of the video taping of Council meetings.

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XII. FUTURE AGENDAS

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XIII. PETITIONS, REQUEST AND COMMUNICATIONS

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12. Connecticut Conference of Municipalities Legislative Update, April 19, 2006.

13. Public Management, April 2006, "Golden Years are Active Years, Study Shows"

14. A letter regarding the organization of the Emergency Service Staff, distributed at the meeting by Mr. Hawkins

15. An email regarding the cat ordinance from Joan Lamont to Mr. Schaefer, distributed at the meeting

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

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Ms. Blair moved and Ms Redding seconded to adjourn the meeting at 11:00 p.m.

Motion so passed.

Elizabeth Paterson, Mayor

Mary Stanton, Town Clerk