



**TOWN OF MANSFIELD
COMMUNITY QUALITY OF LIFE COMMITTEE**

Thursday, October 1, 2009

7:30 P.M.

**Mansfield Town Hall
Council Chambers**

MINUTES OF MEETING

Present: Helen Koehn (chair), Joseph Briody, Bruce Clouette, Jane Fried, Denise Keane, David Morse, Betsy Paterson, Steve Rhodes

Staff: Jim Hintz (UConn), Matt Hart, Mike Nintean, Gregory Padick
(town)

Meeting was called to order at 7:32 p.m.

Bruce Clouette was chosen as Recording Secretary.

The minutes of September 3, 2009 were approved, subject to the correction of several spelling errors.

Opportunity for Public to Address the Committee – none present

Chairperson's Report

H. Koehn reported that the Town Council will be considering reducing the number of Council members on the committee so as to avoid problems with having a quorum.

Items of Business

- 1: Sgt. James Kodzis, supervisor of the town's resident trooper program, gave a presentation that outlined the structure of his force, gave statistics on last year's spring weekend, and showed some trends in accidents and violations. The presentation will be made available on the town's web site. Members of the committees made some observations and asked questions. J. Fried noted the high costs to the public, both local and state, of these disturbances and opined that the number of citations since the semester began seemed low. Sgt. Kodzis responded that the police started with warnings, then went to citations, after which a drop-off in

violations was noticeable. Also, when disturbances escalate to a certain point, the police effort must be directed to crowd control and safety, not ordinance enforcement. J. Briody asked about typical staffing levels on weekends. Sgt. Kodzis responded that there would typically be 2 town officers, 2 officers hired by Carriagehouse, and depending on the scale of the disturbances, additional personnel from Troop C and other State Police Troops, sometimes 12 to 15 in all. D. Morse asked if UConn police participated in off-campus enforcement; the answer was that they primarily served as back-up and that usually they were extremely busy at the same time that town officers and personnel from the Troops were busy. J. Briody noted the inevitable discrepancy in attention that could be given to quality-of-life complaints vs. large-scale disturbances. M. Hart informed the committee of the town's intention to contract for a broad study of policing needs in Mansfield that would include investigating opportunities for cooperation with other entities in the region.

- 2: J. Fried asked that her report on initiating a community conversation on quality-of-life issues be postponed to next month.
- 3: M. Nintean provided the committee with several important pass-outs: a larger-print matrix of the possible action items, a spreadsheet showing the fines for various violations, further information about a possible a residential parking ordinance, draft language for a tenant registry ordinance, the ordinance in Poughkeepsie, NY, that establishes a "student rental" use, and a letter from Mansfield Town Attorney Dennis O'Brian that stated his preliminary review indicated no reason a similar ordinance could not be enacted by a Connecticut municipality.

The committee discussed this material, particularly the Poughkeepsie model as a possible option for Mansfield. M. Nintean encouraged the committee to think of the three tools--parking, tenant registry, and redefinition of allowable rental uses—in a holistic way rather than as separate approaches. D. Morse raised the possibility of coordinating Mansfield actions with surrounding towns, especially Windham. G. Padick opined that making any ordinance and the zoning regulations consistent would be best; changing just the zoning regulations would result in existing established uses being "grandfathered" and allowed to continue, whereas an ordinance could be applied to both existing and future rentals (though with the expectation of legal challenge from affected landowners). Staff also noted that enacting additional ordinances will result in added costs for enforcing them and that the committee should be aware that the Town Council would have to weigh any anticipated costs in the context of the overall town budget. B. Clouette asked that the committee be given time to digest the material and resume work on these proposals the next meeting.

The consensus of the committee was that staff should continue to develop these proposals.

Future Agendas

D. Morse suggested the committee spend some time reviewing the fine structure, and especially compare Mansfield's fines for quality-of-life violations to other communities.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.