

LONDONDERRY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Town Council Meeting Minutes May 9 2022

The meeting took place in the Moose Hill Council Chambers, 268B Mammoth Rd, Londonderry, NH 03053.

Present: Chairman John Farrell; Vice Chairman Joe Green; Councilor Chad Franz, and Deb Paul; Town Manager Michael Malaguti; Assistant Town Manager Lisa Drabik; Absent: Executive Assistant Kirby Brown; Councilor Jim Butler

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Farrell called the Town Council meeting to order at 7:00 PM. This was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. This was followed by a moment of silence for all of those first responders who protect this community and country.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Town Clerk Sherry Farrell gave the Council an update on the dog leash Ordinance. Farrell presented Dawn Williams from Survivors Paws Inc. with \$1,140 from the rabies clinic the town held a few weeks ago. Farrell stated that she's been working with Deputy Police Chief Kim Bernard on the numbers and in the last three years or so the Police Department have had just under 1,500 calls involving dogs. Farrell reminded people to keep their dogs registered and under control.

Pam Dolan Alexander, 176 Pillsbury Rd, stated that she has been a dog owner since 2009. She walks her dog on public land, conservation land, and all over. Pam stated that she has had a few incidents over the years and her dog got hurt. Pam shared her story.

Councilor Paul asked what the next steps were and how much of it will be enforceable. Farrell stated that through education we are hoping to fix some of the issues but also to prepare an amendment to the current Ordinance.

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Ann Chiampa, 28 Wedgewood Drive, shared her experience with her dog being attacked.

Moir Ryan, 2 Snowberry Hollow, stated that she sees what's trying to be done and she hopes that a balance can be created. People have the right to have their pets. Chairman Farrell stated that the Council will be methodical and will go slowly so that it is done right the first time. Vice Chairman Green asked if a leash law should be in effect. Ryan stated that if you do the proper training and your dog listens to voice commands, your dog will listen to you.

Town Manager Malaguti stated that there is an Ordinance in place now that is fairly robust and it essentially incorporates the state statute that regulates dogs running at-large. Chairman Farrell stated that the Council will move forward with tightening up the Ordinance.

Dan Bouchard, O'Connell Drive, asked about the Lions Club getting out of their lease. Chairman Farrell stated that it all happened recently and there is a safety issue with the building. Chairman Farrell stated that access to the building needs to be restricted for safety issues. Town Manager Malaguti gave an update on the matter.

PUBLIC HEARING

Motion to open Public Hearing made by Vice Chairman Green and second by Councilor Franz. Chair votes 4-0-0.

Chairman Farrell introduced Ordinance #2022-05 which is an Ordinance creating the Londonderry Commercial and Industrial Property Tax Incentive Program. Town Manager Malaguti presented. Malaguti presented a PowerPoint, see attached. Malaguti stated that the scope of this program is different from the one that was previously presented. This one is town wide. This program will benefit more and there will be a trial period.

Steve Hamilton, Londonderry Assessor, provided a projection as to how many properties might qualify for this program.

Councilor Paul stated that she is not in favor of this. Councilor Paul stated that this will

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bring jobs and other business are having a hard time finding employees to begin with. Councilor Paul stated that this should be on a warrant and go out to the tax payers.

Councilor Franz asked if this program allows the Council to take up each of these case by case. Malaguti stated that would be correct. Right now, they won't require a public hearing, however if the Council is more comfortable a public hearing with newspaper publication can be required. Councilor Franz asked if this will create more tax revenue and create less burden on the residents. Malaguti stated that is the goal.

Malaguti stated that it was discussed in the fall when it was tabled and we have talked about it more recently. Malaguti stated that we won't know 100% if something will be successful but that we should not let the perfect be the enemy of the good.

Councilor Paul stated that she hasn't heard much positive feedback on this program.

Malaguti, responding to an earlier comment, stated that a great deal of thought has gone into this program.

Chairman Farrell addressed that New Hampshire is a Dillon Rule state. Chairman Farrell stated that every year Londonderry has to raise \$20M a year to run the town. Chairman Farrell explained where taxpayers' dollars go.

Robert Lebreux, 76 Hall Rd, said it does shift the tax burden away from the residential property taxes in year three, but it also does the same to existing commercial properties. Lebreux asked if the assumption is that they would never build here absent as an incentive? Lebreux stated that there were plenty of places built here without a tax incentive. Lebreux stated that ten years is a long time to carry it out. Lebreux stated that he understands the benefit, but he doesn't see it as a good fit for Londonderry.

Kristine Perez, 5 Wesley Drive, asked if there is any way the state can interfere with this with land use regulations. Malaguti stated that there is a bill that discusses short term rentals.

Motion to continue Ordinance #2022-05 made by Councilor Paul and second by Vice Chairman Green. Council gave a consensus to continue so that they can work on specifics.

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Chairman Farrell introduced Resolution #2022-06, a Resolution relative to the Veteran's Tax Credit Policy. Chairman Farrell reminded the public that the revenue has to come from somewhere. When tax credits are given, it's only coming out of the town budget, not the school budget.

Councilor Franz recused himself because he is receiving the existing credit.

Malaguti presented with Town Assessor, Steve Hamilton. Malaguti stated that the optional veterans tax credit is currently set at \$500.00, and the all veterans tax credit is also set at \$500.00. In April 2018, the state authorized municipalities to offer a \$750.00 credit and Londonderry did not opt into it. Malaguti advised doing this outside the budget process requires the Town to absorb the cost into the operating budget in FY 22 and 23, which is not a best practice. He expressed additional concerns, but ultimately advised the Council they may increase the credits to \$625, but should probably not increase them to \$750. Malaguti stated that it is also important to recognize the sacrifice our veterans have made.

Councilor Paul asked if this is income based. Hamilton and Malaguti explained the program is not means-tested per statute.

Chairman Farrell stated that no matter what, the money has to come from somewhere.

Robert Lebreux, 76 Hall Rd, thanked the Council for the tax credit and agreed with Vice Chairman Green that it should be the full amount at \$750.00. Lebreux stated that he knows some towns aren't even doing the \$500.00. The sooner Londonderry gets to \$750.00 the better and he appreciates, as well as all veterans, the credit offered.

Kristine Perez, 5 Wesley Drive, stated that veterans deserve this. These men and women served and deserve this. This town can afford it.

Malaguti stated that there are currently 924 veterans taking the credit. Taking it to \$750.00 would cost the town approximately \$693,000.00.

Doug Thomas, 143 Mammoth Rd, stated that he supports this and Vice Chairman Green's suggestion of \$750.00.

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Bill Graser, 3 Eayers Range Road, stated that he has been here since 1978 and he can remember when the credit was only \$50.00. Graser stated that he supports the \$750.00.

Vice Chairman Green made a motion to amend the increased credit \$750.00.

Councilor Paul asked if it was possible to take one credit to \$625.00 and another to \$750.00. Malaguti stated that you can't because they're tied together by statute.

Councilor Paul seconded Vice Chairman's motion to amend it to \$750.00.

Motion to carried a 3-0-1 vote. Chairman Farrell, Vice Chairman Green, and Councilor Paul all voted to support the amendment of \$750.00. The Council voted to adopt the proposal to raise both exemptions to \$750.00.

Councilor Franz rejoined the meeting. Motion to close public hearing made by Vice Chairman Green and second by Councilor Paul. Chair votes 4-0-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Farrell introduced Order #2022-06, an Order relative the distribution of Fire Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. Fire Chief Darren O'Brien presented. Chief O'Brien stated that this is for turnout gear. Motion to approve Order #2022-06 made by Vice chairman Green and second by Councilor Paul. Chair votes 4-0-0.

Chairman Farrell introduced Order #2022-07, an Order relative to the expenditure of Maintenance Trust Funds for various projects. Dave Wholley presented. Wholley stated that this is for an issue with the Town Hall generator and a small leak. Motion to approve Order #2022-07 made by Vice Chairman Green and second by Councilor Paul. Chair votes 4-0-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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Motion to approve the Town Council minutes from April 18, 2022 made by Vice Chairman Green and second by Councilor Paul. Chair votes 4-0-0.

Town Manager Mike Malaguti gave the Town Manager's report.

The Council gave their liaison reports.

APPOINTMENTS

Motion to appoint John Wilson as a full-time member on the Senior Resources Committee made by Vice Chairman Green and second by Councilor Paul. Chair votes 4-0-0. Wilson was previously an alternate.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Vice Chairman Green and second by Councilor Franz. Chair votes 4-0-0.

Notes and Tapes by:	Kirby Brown	Date: 5/09/2022
Minutes Typed by:	Kirby Brown	Date: 5/12/2022
Approved by:	Town Council	Date: 5/23/2022