

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 4, 2008

President Letellier – Welcome to our Agawam City Council meeting of Monday, August 4, 2008.

Item 1. Citizen's Speak Time

President Letellier – We have one speaker, Mr. Mazza. Please come to the microphone. Make sure you turn it on and state your name and address for the record and you'll have five minutes.

Todd Mazza – Hi. My name is Todd Mazza. I live at 58 Belvidere Avenue in Feeding Hills. I am here to discuss just an issue that I saw in the Agawam Advertiser on July 24th and it's probably not anything that maybe I'm sure you'll be discussing at Council, maybe it's more of a Mayor type thing but I'm gonna just go ahead and say what I'm gonna say I guess and if it's not pertinent then we'll go from there. The article dealt with the property at Wade Village being converted from the Town to the Agawam Housing Authority. The article said this, I don't know if anybody read it, but this is what the article said. "On August 11th, representatives from the MHP and DHCD will meet with Agawam Housing Authority commissioners to pursue plans previously put on hold but now activated to construct approximately thirty to thirty six units of new low income housing at Wade Village in Feeding Hills. The property behind the Wade Village was given to the Town by the State with the understanding that it would be turned into a park. The agreement stated that if the property was not used as a park, it would be revert back to the Housing Authority. This is a quote from Carl Standen who is I guess the Housing Authority Commissioner, Authority Director, "We'll be meeting with the Mayor Dawson to request an official release of the deeded property back to the Agawam Housing Authority. The housing is desperately, this housing is desperately needed in Agawam." Now what set me off was I don't need if it's desperately needed, I mean maybe housing is needed, but I hope that we don't *need* low income housing in Agawam and I hope that we don't desperately need it in Agawam. This is my reaction to the article. I thought the Town had dropped the ball. It didn't turn the land into a park which by the way I think if it does qualify as a park because it has a basketball court and a field where kids can play and I think this area should be used as a space – an open space – where kids from Wade Village or Brady Village can play. If another housing complex is put up there, where are these kids gonna be able to play? I mean it's a place that they can play in the back there and they're not gonna have that area. I don't think it's fair to those residents that already live there, there's gonna be 30 -36 more housing units constructed. The other reaction I had to the article was basically that he said we desperately needed it and I don't feel we desperately need low income housing in Agawam. I've lived here for thirty five years and my parents basically moved to Agawam from other places and they grew up and some of you know my parents and some of you know me up there and so, I've been a lifelong resident of Agawam. I just don't feel we need more low income housing. The crime or the influx or kids is another issue from housing that we've seen. You can see the police records and where they're called to most Friday and Saturday, probably Friday and Saturday nights, is either Six Flags or over at the low income areas of Agawam. That's just the way it is. If we say our schools are overcrowded why would we want another thirty to thirty six more families to move in with who knows how many kids? Now I'm sure the only reason that Mr. Standen wants the units is to show that he has more people that are gonna fill those spaces. I'm sure some of the reason that the Mayor may want it is because of the subsidies from the government and whatever but I'm just looking at the cost of over time, those subsidies are gonna be eaten up by more cops and more teachers for our schools and just more on this end than that end.

Clerk – One minute please.

Todd Mazza – Thank you. I also like to specifically ask maybe Jill Messick if she could look into this because it is an open space and I know she’s an open space/conservationist expertise kind of thing, she might be able to look into this and maybe discuss it with the Mayor to keep that as an open space. That would be great. The other thing, very quickly, is when I did call Carl Standen’s office. I just wanted to ask him why he said it was such a pressing need that we desperately needed it and he said, and his quote was, his reply was “I can say what I want to the Advertiser”. Then I asked him if he lived in Agawam and the reply I got was “click” – the phone hung up. Now I didn’t call him back and I didn’t, I felt that was pretty rude and you know whatever. So I’m just wanted to discuss what had happened there, here, I don’t know if this is the right place for that, but if you have a guy like that running the Agawam Housing Authority with that rude disposition, I don’t know these people are making the right decisions for Agawam in that capacity.

Clerk – Time.

Todd Mazza – Okay, thank you. I’d just like to thank you for your time and I appreciate you listening to me whether it was pertinent or not to the City Council. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you Mr. Mazza.

Item 2. Roll Call

President Letellier – Barbara, could you please call the roll?

ROLL CALL – 10 Present, 1 Absent (Councilor Calabrese)

President Letellier – CeCe Calabrese is on vacation this week.

Item 3. Moment of Silence and the Pledge of Allegiance

President Letellier – Would you please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance and a Moment of Silence.

Item 4. Minutes

(a) Regular Council Meeting – July 7, 2008

President Letellier – First we’ll have the Regular Council Minutes from July 7, 2008, moved by Councilor Perry, seconded by Councilor Rheault. Any discussion? Amendments or corrections? No? Voice Vote – all in favor please signify by saying Ay. Opposed? Abstentions? I believe there should be one more abstention, Councilor Bitzas? Two abstentions.

VOICE VOTE – 8 Yes, 2 Abstentions (Councilors Simpson and Bitzas), 1 Absent (Councilor Calabrese)

(b) Special Council Meeting – October 15, 2007

President Letellier – Do we have a motion? Moved by Councilor Simpson, seconded by Councilors Rheault and Rossi. Any discussion, additions or corrections? No? These are executive session meetings so I'm gonna have a roll call vote. Barbara, could you call the roll?

ROLL CALL – 9 Yes, 1 Abstentions (Councilor Cavallo), 1 Absent (Councilor Calabrese)

President Letellier – You're right, you got sworn in January first or second what have you. Councilor Messick, do you want to correct your vote?

Councilor Messick – Yes. I'll abstain.

President Letellier – Okay. So we have eight yes, two abstentions for October 15th.

ROLL CALL – 8 Yes, 2 Abstentions (Councilors Cavallo and Messick), 1 Absent (Councilor Calabrese)

(c) Special Council Meeting – February 19, 2008

President Letellier – Moved by Councilor Simpson, seconded by Councilor Rheault. Barbara, could you please call the roll?

ROLL CALL – 10 Yes, 1 Absent (Councilor Calabrese)

President Letellier – With ten yes, one absent, you've approved the February 19th meeting minutes.

(d) Special Council Meeting – April 7, 2008

President Letellier – Barbara, could you please call the roll?

ROLL CALL – 10 Yes, 1 Absent (Councilor Calabrese)

President Letellier – Ten yes, one absent the May 19th 2008 minutes.

(e) Special Council Meeting – May 19, 2008

Item 5. Declaration from Council President

President Letellier – We only have one declaration this evening from Council President and that is that Councilor Rossi has graciously agreed to step into the big shoes of Joe Mineo and become the Sewer Committee Chair. So thank you Councilor Rossi.

Item 6. Presentation of Petitions, Memorials & Remonstrances

(a) Resolutions

1. TR-2008-20 - A Resolution Requesting the Mayor to Appropriate Funds for the Board of Appeals to Employ Outside Counsel for the Appeal of the Special Permit Granted to Six Flags New England. (Council) (Tabled 7/7/08) (Majority of those present and voting)

President Letellier – Do we have a motion? Okay, we have three lights and two voices and no one's been called on yet. I believe the first light I saw was Councilor Rheault?

Councilor Rheault – Yea. I move to leave it on the table if the status is the same.

President Letellier – As far as I know that matter has not been dismissed. So I have a motion to leave it on the table by Councilor Rheault, seconded by Councilor Rossi. Barbara, could you please call the roll?

ROLL CALL – 9 Yes, 1 No (Councilor Bitzas), 1 Absent (Councilor Calabrese)

President Letellier – With a vote of nine yes, one no and one absent, we have kept the item on the table. I'm getting some feedback. Is anyone else hearing it? No? Just me, okay thank you, maybe it's me.

2. TR-2008-42 - A Resolution Establishing a No Parking Zone on South Street. (Mayor) (Referred to the Public Safety Committee) (Majority of those present and voting)

President Letellier – Moved by Councilor Rossi, seconded by Councilor Simpson.

Councilor Perry – Did you want a report from our sub-committee?

President Letellier – Yea but we have to move the item first. So the item has been moved, do we have a report from the Safety Commission?

Councilor Perry – Thank you Madam President. Yes, our Public Safety Committee met on July 22nd at 7:00 pm at the library in the Peirce Room. Present were myself as Chairman, Councilor Robert Rossi and Councilor Donald Rheault. Also present was Lt. Light from the Agawam Police Department. This report I'm giving is going to cover TR-2008-42 and TR-2008-43, both are to establish a no parking zone on specific streets in our community. I specifically asked when I called for this meeting that a representative of the Fire, Police and DPW be present at our meeting to discuss these issues in regards to the no parking. I did receive a letter from Fire Chief Martin in regards to his opinion in regards to the no parking. I also talked the day of the meeting with Jack Stone, Superintendent of the DPW, he was on vacation prior to that and when he got back in the office he seen it and it was that day. He did call me on that and Lt. Light was present at our meeting to give us his input in regards to these no parking matters and where I'm going with this is we did have lengthy discussions as a sub-committee and we did have amendments to both coming into this meeting in regards to the amount of footage, the specific streets and in regards to what we felt was in the best interests of the community. I did talk with Jack Stone in regards to this and when I talked with Jack he had talked with the Mayor because Jack is the one that actually wrote these resolutions up, he stated to

me that at that point in time that the Mayor was speaking with our legal department, our City Solicitor Chris Johnson, in regards to how the effect would be on the residents of those streets in regards to having no parking. And he was looking into some legal issues to try and exempt the residents from there. I had a discussion with the Mayor today in regards to that to try and get an update of has anything else come forward from the legal department and she informed that at that point in time they were looking into it. They were looking into possible, possibly using like condominiums do where they have residential placquards type thing but they haven't come to finalize that. And I explained to her at the point in time if that's something that you plan on doing then you have to amend or take these off the table and come in with new resolutions and at that point in time she asked me and I did talk with my committee members before the meeting that the recommendation is to table both of these items. I will be calling another meeting on it in the course of the month when I hear from Chris Johnson in regards to this. So I'm gonna make a recommendation from our committee at this point in time to table both these items, TR-2008-42 and TR-2008-43. That's my report as of this evening. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you. Will you be making that motion to table?

Councilor Perry – I didn't know if there was any more discussion.

President Letellier – Any further discussion? No?

Councilor Perry – I make a motion to table TR-2008-42.

President Letellier – Thank you. Seconds? Seconded by Councilors Rossi and Rheault. Barbara, could you call the roll, the first item is TR-2008-42, the motion is to table the item.

ROLL CALL – 10 Yes, 1 Absent (Councilor Calabrese)

President Letellier – With ten yes, one absent, we've voted to table TR-2008-42.

3. TR-2008-43 - A Resolution Establishing a No Parking Zone on Kanawha Avenue, Ruskin Avenue, Sunnyslope Avenue, Woodcliff Avenue, Riverview Avenue, Veranda Avenue and Mark Drive. (Mayor) (Referred to the Public Safety Committee) (Majority of those present and voting)

President Letellier – We have a recommendation to table from the Public Safety Committee. Do you want to make that motion, Councilor Perry?

Councilor Perry – Motion to table.

President Letellier – Okay. Seconded by Councilors Rheault and Messick. Again, Barbara, could you call the roll? A yes vote is to table the item.

ROLL CALL – 10 Yes, 1 Absent (Councilor Calabrese)

President Letellier – With ten yes, one absent, you've tabled TR-2008-43.

4. TR-2008-44 - A Resolution Accepting a Gift in the Amount of Ten Thousand (\$10,000.00) Dollars from Nick & Annette Liquori Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, Section 53A, for the Community Preservation Fund (Mayor) (Majority of the Full Council or 6 votes)

President Letellier – Do we have a motion? Moved by Councilors Cavallo and Simpson, seconded by Councilors Rheault, Rossi and Bitzas. Do we have any discussion? Councilor Mineo?

Councilor Mineo – I would just like to thank the Liquori family for their generous gift.

President Letellier – Thank you. Any other discussion? Councilor Bitzas?

Councilor Bitzas – I would ask also, I agree with Councilor Mineo, I would like to thank the Liquori family. It's a good gesture. We appreciate, personally appreciate, the Town should appreciate and I believe with the naming of the park with Franco's name, I hope the pain and sorrow will be a little bit softened.

President Letellier – Thank you. Councilor Cavallo?

Councilor Cavallo – Yea. I've known the family for quite a few years. I've known Franco and having had all the kids at the High School, all of them went through including the daughter Lucy, I think, many times going to see Nick and seeing Annette at church very, very often, I go up to her and ask her how things are going. The family is certainly hurt and I think this is one way that they can bring some solace back to their home and we greatly appreciate what the Liquori family has done.

President Letellier – Thank you. I know we haven't had the vote yet but I think the entire Council and the entire Town are grateful to the Liquori family for their generous gift. That being said, Barbara, could you call the roll and let's make it a formality?

ROLL CALL – 10 Yes, 1 Absent (Councilor Calabrese)

President Letellier – With ten yes, one absent, we have graciously accepted the gift from the Liquori family.

5. TR-2008-45 - A Resolution Accepting a Drainage and Flood Easement over the Property Located at 59 Alhambra Circle South. (Mayor) (Majority of those present and voting)

President Letellier – If you recall it had to do with the flooding from the park. Do we have a motion? Moved by Councilors Rossi and Rheault, seconded by Councilor Cavallo. Any discussion? No? Seeing none, Barbara, could you please call the roll?

ROLL CALL – 10 Yes, 1 Absent (Councilor Calabrese)

President Letellier – With ten yes, one absent, we have approved the acceptance of the drainage easement.

Item 7. Report of Council Committees

None

Item 8. Elections

1. TE-2008-5 - Election to select a member of the Community Preservation Act Committee to complete an unexpired term expiring April 30, 2010 (Council) (Majority of those entitled to vote or six votes)

President Letellier – Again, this is because of Dottie Drewnowski leaving the committee and moving. Do we have a nomination? Councilor Rheault?

Councilor Rheault – I nominate Christina Thompson.

President Letellier – Okay. We have the nomination of Christina Thompson. Any additional nominations? A second is not necessary. Do we have a motion to close nominations? Moved by Councilor Simpson, seconded by Councilor Rossi. I'm sorry, Barbara, could you call the roll? If you'd like Ms. Thompson, please indicate Thompson.

ROLL CALL – 10 Thompson, 1 Absent (Councilor Calabrese)

President Letellier – With a vote of ten yes, we have approved Christina Thompson's election to the Community Preservation Committee. Barbara, could you please let her know?

Item 9. Public Hearings

None

Item 10. Old Business

1. TO-2008-33 - Voucher List (\$44.48) (Majority of those present and voting)

President Letellier – And I will send that through right now. That is supplies from Staples. Moved by Councilor Perry, seconded by Councilor Rossi. Any discussion? No? Seeing none, could you call the roll please?

ROLL CALL – 10 Yes, 1 Absent (Councilor Calabrese)

President Letellier – With ten yes, one absent, we have approved the voucher list.

2. TOR-2008-2 - An Ordinance Amending Section 180-49 and Adding Section 180-49A to the Code of the Town of Agawam Governing Height of Buildings and Structures in Amusement Parks in the Business B Zone (Mayor) (1/3) (Referred Jointly to the Zoning & Ordinance Committees) (2/3 Majority of the Full Council or 8 votes) Set Joint Public Hearing with Planning Board – suggest September 17, 2008

President Letellier – This matter needs to have a public hearing so we have a suggested public

hearing date of September 17, 2008. We tried for the first September meeting but the Planning office felt that they wouldn't have enough time with vacations and so on to have the matter reviewed and we're also waiting for updates from Attorney Johnson. So how does September 17th sound? That's the second September meeting. Okay? We'll just do that. So public hearing is September 17, 2008.

3. TOR-2008-3 - An Ordinance Amending Sections 180-15 and 180-16 and Adding Section 180-15A to the Code of the Town of Agawam Governing Enforcement and Penalties For Violating the Zoning Ordinances of the Town of Agawam (Mayor) (Referred Jointly to the Zoning & Ordinance Committees) (1/3) (2/3 Majority of the Full Council or 8 votes) Set Joint Public Hearing with Planning Board – suggest September 17, 2008

President Letellier – Again, a public hearing with the Planning Board is needed and that will be set for September 17th absent any objections. No? Seeing none, September 17th public hearing.

4. TOR-2008-4 - An Ordinance Amending Article XIII of the Code of the Town of Agawam Governing Signs (Mayor) (1/3) (Referred jointly to the Zoning & Ordinance Committees) (2/3 Majority of the Full Council or 8 votes) Set Joint Public Hearing with Planning Board – suggest September 17, 2008

President Letellier – So we are suggesting September 17th again. I'll presume that's okay cuz the first two were okay. So September 17, 2008.

Item 11. New Business

1. TO-2008-34 - Voucher List (\$4,827.00) (Majority of those present and voting)

President Letellier – That's next agenda. Those are our dues to the MMA.

2. TO-2008-35 - Order Granting or Renewing a LICENSE for an Auctioneer Permit – Crowley's Commission Sales, Inc., 32 Shoemaker Lane, Agawam, MA. (Clerk) (Majority of those present and voting)

President Letellier – I will be recusing myself from voting and Councilor Calabrese will run the item and that's next agenda. And I guess we'll refer that to the License Committee – Councilor Rossi?

3. TO-2008-36 - Voucher List (\$30.95) (Majority of those present and voting)

President Letellier – Next agenda.

4. TO-2008-37 - Voucher List (\$14.90) (Majority of those present and voting)

President Letellier – Next agenda.

5. TR-2008-46 - A Resolution Authorizing an Appropriation of Seventy Thousand (\$70,000.00) Dollars from the Stabilization Fund to the Middle School and Junior High School Textbooks and the Senior High School Equipment Account (Mayor) (2/3 Majority of the Full Council or 8 votes)

President Letellier – That is next agenda and also I can see that we've already had a committee meeting set for that.

6. TR-2008-47 - A Resolution Revising the No Parking Zone on Hunt Street (Mayor) (Majority of those present and voting)

President Letellier – I'll refer that to Traffic & Street Safety, I'm sorry, Public Safety, forgive me! Next agenda.

7. TO-2008-38 - Order Granting or Renewing a LICENSE for a Junk Dealer's Permit – John's Trucking of Agawam, 415 Silver Street, Agawam, MA. (Clerk) (Majority of those present and voting)

President Letellier – Again, License Committee please and we'll save that for next agenda.

Item 12. Any other matter that may legally come before the City Council.

President Letellier – I believe we'll start with Councilor Perry this time. We started on Councilor Mineo's side last time.

Councilor Perry – Nothing this evening.

President Letellier – Thank you. Councilor Messick?

Councilor Messick – Yes. I'd just like to bring people's attention that there are going to be walks through Robinson State Park to see the very large tulip poplar trees. They're going to be occurring on the ninth and the sixteenth. I believe they start at 9:00 and meeting at the James Street entrance. So I hope to see a lot of people there. It's very, very interesting. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you. Councilor Bitzas?

Councilor Bitzas – Nothing this evening.

President Letellier – Thank you. Councilor Young?

Councilor Young – Nothing thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you. Councilor Simpson?

Councilor Simpson – Nothing tonight, thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you. Councilor Mineo?

Councilor Mineo – Nothing tonight.

President Letellier – Thank you. Councilor Cavallo?

Councilor Cavallo – Yea. I asked before Madam President the possibility of getting an update on the 43D. I believe, I heard, that a consultant has been hired or someone has been hired to do the project. But I know September is going to be very busy between the two meetings especially the 17th and the first one's probably gonna be crowded with all of this, so is there any chance or possibility in October that the Planner could come to the meeting and give us an update on 43D?

President Letellier – Sure I can ask her for a written report because there's an actual item of agenda, she really can't speak.

Councilor Cavallo – Fine. Not just to me, to the entire Council.

President Letellier – No, no that's fine. I'll ask the Planning Department for an update. Thank you. Councilor Rossi?

Councilor Rossi – Nothing this evening.

President Letellier – Thank you. Councilor Rheault?

Councilor Rheault – Nothing thank you.

President Letellier – Well, I guess I won't break the momentum then. Do we have a motion to adjourn? So moved. Moved and accepted by the Council, all in favor say Ay? Opposed? Thank you very much. We'll see you next month.

Adjournment.