

AUGUST 15, 2013
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

The August 15, 2013, Town Council Meeting was called to order by John L. Lewis, Jr., President of the Foster Town Council, at the Town House, 181 Howard Hill Road, Foster, Rhode Island, at 7:00 p.m.

The following members were present:
John L. Lewis, Jr., President,
Roger L. Hawes,
Denise DiFranco, and
Neal C. Whitelaw.
Pamela Fontaine, excused.

Also present:
Renee M. Bevilacqua, Town Solicitor
Patricia Moreau, Tax Assessor
Robert Hohler, DPW Director
Ann-Marie Ignasher, Town Planner
Chief Wm. Ziehl

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

John L. Lewis, Jr. stated that the notice of the meeting was properly posted on the Secretary of State's web site.

John L. Lewis, Jr. read the notice from the top of the agenda: *The Foster Town Council does not sanction any electronic audio/video recordings of Town Council Meetings made by the public. Any audio/video recordings made by the public are not public records under Title 38 Public Records.*

John L. Lewis, Jr. noted that Pamela Fontaine was absent due to a family emergency.

III. BID AWARD

The bid for the Engineering Inspection and Evaluation of Five Bridges was awarded. DPW Director Robert Hohler reported on the credit checks performed on the three lowest bidders. His recommendation was to award the bid to Resource Controls.

Neal Whitelaw moved, Roger Hawes seconded, to accept the recommendation of the DPW Director and the Town Planner and award the bid to Resource Controls in the amount of \$9,755.00.

Discussion: Gordon Rogers asked where the funds were coming from. John L. Lewis, Jr. stated that they were coming from the Capital Fund for DPW.

John L. Lewis, Jr., aye; Roger Hawes, aye; Denise DiFranco, aye; and Neal Whitelaw, aye. Motion carried 4-0.

IV. BID OPENING

The bids for the Plainwoods Road Bridge Construction were opened as follows:

1. New England Infrastructure, Inc. – Hudson, MA
\$599,000.00
2. Cardi Corporation – Warwick, RI
\$387,200.00
3. New England Building & Bridge Co. – Greenville, RI
\$364,496.00

Roger Hawes moved, Neal Whitelaw seconded, to refer the bids to the DPW Director for recommendation.

Discussion: Lynne Rider asked if it were true that this would be just for the underpinning, or if it included the deck as the deck was not very old. John L. Lewis, Jr. was not sure; Mr. Hohler indicated yes. John L. Lewis, Jr. asked what the FEMA reimbursement amount was. Ann-Marie Ignasher replied that it was 80 percent. Mr. Hohler said that they could include the amount but not have to use it. That's like \$7,000.00.

Peter Donatelli asked if the bids were available for viewing. Atty. Renee Bevilacqua said they could not be viewed until awarded.

Ron Cervasio asked how much was left from last year. Treasurer Kelli Russ said \$80,000.

John L. Lewis, Jr., aye; Roger Hawes, aye; Denise DiFranco, aye; and Neal Whitelaw, aye. Motion carried 4-0.

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V. NEW BUSINESS
a. Dept. Head & Employee Attendance & Compensation for Mtgs.

John L. Lewis, Jr. explained that the policy for attending meetings needed to be clarified. Some come to meetings, some don't, some ask for compensation, others don't.

John L. Lewis, Jr. moved, Roger Hawes seconded, to require that the Town Treasurer, Planner, DPW Director, Police Chief, Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk—five department heads—attend every meeting.

John L. Lewis, Jr., aye; Roger Hawes, aye; Denise DiFranco, aye; and Neal Whitelaw, aye. Motion carried 4-0.

John L. Lewis, Jr. stated that he thought the compensation policy should be the same for everyone. Neal Whitelaw stated that it was already addressed in the Personnel Policy. If you have a work schedule and have to attend meetings, then you will be given scheduled time off. Planner Ann-Marie Ignasher asked what heading this was under in the Personnel Policy. Neal Whitelaw replied that it was 501, pg. 37, 501.03 to be exact.

John L. Lewis, Jr. said that if that was in place then he was fine with that. Department Heads can schedule with the Town Clerk.

Ron Cervasio stated that Mr. Whitelaw was mixing apples and oranges. The Dept. Heads do not deserve compensation for coming to meetings. Mr. Whitelaw is bringing forward policy that only applies to union employees. Denise DiFranco read the policy which stated "all elected and appointed officials."

John L. Lewis, Jr. stated that the topic was covered and did not require any action. Treasurer Kelli Russ said she would like a unilateral ruling created for being excused. John L. Lewis, Jr. said to notify the Town Council President first, then Vice President, then Town Clerk if neither of them is available.

b. Planner's Hours

John L. Lewis, Jr. stated that he had informed members of the council that he had asked the Planner to work extra hours. After seeing the heavy workload from visiting Town Hall with such projects as bridges, comp plan, WRIHR, and a number of things that were in the works, and within the allowances from the Financial Town Meeting, he asked for her to work 30 hours per week until the end of the year. He requested that the council endorse his decision.

Roger Hawes moved on the request, Denise DiFranco seconded.
Discussion: Denise DiFranco said she assumed that Mr. Lewis had figured out the amount of the allocation. Mr. Lewis stated that yes, it would not exceed the amount allocated by the Financial Town Meeting even if she worked until June. Denise DiFranco asked if that would qualify her for benefits. John L. Lewis, Jr. stated no. Denise DiFranco then questioned why he was asking. John L. Lewis, Jr. stated that he didn't want it to be a surprise months from now, he would like everyone to be on board. John L. Lewis, Jr. stated he had specified December 31st. Neal Whitelaw stated that without a date it could be longer or sooner. It's working fine. John L. Lewis, Jr. agreed, he just wanted all council members to be aware of it.

Ron Cervasio stated that the Comprehensive Plan was not done but this was not the Planner's fault. He said the hours might involve Obamacare and to ask the Treasurer although that might not take affect now.

Gordon Rogers said that this was money for consulting and should be sent out to bid rather than sliding it over to the Planner. Lynne S. Rider stated that the money was not for other consulting but for the Town Planner. She also brought up the fact that there is a big project going on at Rt. 6 and 94 and that the Planner will be quite busy.

Mr. Lewis stated that he thought not giving a date might be unpalatable. Denise DiFranco stated that she would like to revisit it more often. John L. Lewis, Jr. asked how often. Denise DiFranco stated that she could use the monthly reports. Neal Whitelaw stated that if something is not broke, don't fix it. She is doing her job and doing other people's jobs. John L. Lewis, Jr. reiterated that we will leave it as is.

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Roger Hawes withdrew his motion. Denise DiFranco withdrew her second. John L. Lewis, Jr. asked that the minutes show that we'll leave things as they are.

VI. ADJOURNMENT Roger Hawes moved, Denise DiFranco seconded, to adjourn the meeting.

John L. Lewis, Jr., aye; Roger Hawes, aye; Denise DiFranco, aye; and Neal Whitelaw, aye. Motion carried 4-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

A digital sound file is made a part of the record for a complete account of the council meeting.

Submitted by

Carol Lyons Sholly, CMC
Town Clerk