

Mayor Mark D. Boughton  
City Council Members

Mayor Mark D. Boughton called **the Special City Council Meeting** to order at 8:15 p.m. on June 21, 2010.

**Present were Council Members:** Robert Arconti, Philip Curran, Nancy Deep-Damici, Robert Riley, Gregg Seabury, Colleen Stanley, Don Taylor, Philip Colla, Shay Nagarsheth, Michael Halas, Joseph Cavo, Fred Visconti, Peter Nero, Duane Perkins, Ben Chianese, Paul Rotello, Mary Teicholz and Sal Tumino.

**PRESENT: 18. ABSENT: 2**

Councilmember Trombetta had family business, Councilmember Knapp was away on business. Council member Saadi arrived at 8:30 p.m.

Corporation Counsel Robert Yamin and Lazlo Pinter, Director of Finance David St. Hilaire, Tax Assessor Colleen LaHood and Mr. Foley of Realty Equities Group were also in attendance.

**Pledge of Allegiance & Prayer**

Council member Arconti led the Pledge and prayer in honor of Donald Hassiak.

Council President Cavo moved to accept the call to return to service for the Special Meeting, seconded by Council member Nagarsheth. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

**Notice of the Special Meeting** – There will be a Special Meeting of the City Council on Monday, June 21, 2010 at 8:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers to act on the items listed:

1. **Tax Freeze for Eligible Elderly Homeowners (age 65 and older) Code of Ordinance, Section 18-12.1.1.**
2. **Lease – Old Ridgebury Road (mixed Use Project with Theater, Retail Space).**

**Public Speaking:** The Mayor called for public comment on the agenda items. As no member of the public wished to speak, public participation was closed at 8:18 p.m. Mayor Boughton gave notice that the new flat panel televisions installed in the Council Chambers were not purchased with tax dollars, but with a grant from Homeland Security.

1. **COMMUNICATION – Tax Freeze for Eligible Elderly Homeowners (Code of Ordinance Section 18-12.1.1):**

**Council President Cavo moved to adopt the ordinance as presented by Corporation Counsel. The motion was seconded by Council member Nagarsheth.**

Discussion followed. Mr. Cavo asked Corporation Counsel about income limits and other rules. Mr. Pinter said the State allows the City to adopt these ordinances and they establish certain standards. Implementation is done by the Assessor. The way the freeze is calculated is based on an income scale. Income is determined by an IRS tax return. Mr. Chianese wanted clarification that the freeze could not be combined with any other credits(-i.e. Veterans credit). Mayor Boughton said they cannot double-dip with credits, but they can apply every year. Ms. LaHood said there have been 524 applications so far, about 515 have been accepted. Mr. Arconti asked what towns offer a tax freeze for elderly. Mayor Boughton said Trumbull is the only other city to offer a freeze.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

2. **COMMUNICATION – Lease – Old Ridgebury Rd.:**

**Council President Cavo moved to waive the reading of the ad hoc reports. Seconded by Mr. Seabury. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Council President Cavo moved to adopt the recommendation of the Ad hoc committee. Seconded by Ms. Teicholz.**

Discussion followed. Council member Saadi arrived at 8:31 p.m. Mr. Rotello had concerns about the long term of the lease, competition with the Ives Center and future environmental liability. Mr. Chianese asked what rights the City has as landlord and what protections are in place. Mr. Yamin said there are a host of requirements and clauses in place. Mayor Boughton noted the land would be owned by the City, but the improvements to the property would be on the tax rolls. Mr. Seabury asked what protection we have if they walk away. Mayor Boughton said they won't walk away if they pay the City \$2.5 million up front. Mr. Saadi asked if they voted to authorize the lease, would a motion to reconsider have to be by a member who voted to approve the lease. Mr. Pinter said the motion would be crafted to avoid the need to come back to reconsider, since there may be repercussions. Mr. Visconti asked if this would open a Pandora's box for building in the area. Mayor Boughton said that would be a Planning & Zoning issue. Mr. Nero worried about the impact on downtown and asked what the timetable was. Mr. Foley said it would be 1 ½-2 years from approvals to retail operation. Mr. Perkins asked what the motion on the floor was. Mr. Pinter said:

**“Motion to declare as surplus, 13+/- acres on Old Ridgebury Rd., as described and depicted, and, subject to posting and Planning Commission approval, authorize the lease of the property to Realty Equities Group, pursuant to a lease agreement, with all material terms as described and as finally negotiated.”**

Mr. Rotello asked if a motion to reconsider required a 2/3 vote. Mr. Pinter said only a simple majority is required. Ms. Deep-Damici asked if a yes vote tonight still allows the Council to reconsider at the July 2010 meeting. Mayor Boughton said yes.

**The motion passed 17-2 with 2 absent. Paul Rotello and Duane Perkins voted in the negative.**

**Mr. Seabury moved to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Nagarsheth. Motion passed unanimously at 9:20 p.m.**