

CITY OF BEACON - Workshop Minutes – October 26, 2009

Workshop was opened at 7:00pm on October 26, 2009, with a Motion to go into Executive Session to discuss Personnel. A Motion was made by Council Kelly, Second by Council Leake to come out of Executive Session at 7:15pm. Workshop commenced at 7:15pm

Attendance:

Mayor Steve K. Gold
Council Member Casale
Council Member Kelly
Council Member Leake

Council Member Pasti
Council Member Thompson
Council Member Fredericks

Also in Attendance:
Administrator - M. Robson
City Attorney – R. Wolf

Disaster Preparedness:

City Administrator stated back in back in the spring of 2008 all Council Members received a **draft** of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. Tonight all Council Members received what we consider a “final” copy. We have been reviewing this EMP to make improvements. The one item that was carefully looked at is the responsibility of the emergency operation center in the event of an emergency. The City Administrator has been named Emergency Management Coordinator. Present this evening from the Disaster Preparedness Committee, Glenn Scofield, Mike Davis, Tim Dexter, and they will be able to answer any questions. Moving forward the City of Beacon will be discussing shelters, emergency resources, etc.

Council Member Pasti asked about a timeline of events, such as a “Drill Test”. If the City would have an emergency in two weeks, would we know what to do? City Administrator stated that within a year the City of Beacon should have a working Emergency Management Plan in place, with Dutchess County Emergency Response.

Council Pasti asked what are the pros and cons. One con is it is not real, it is a superficial drill, and this would be beneficial to the City of Beacon as that is where you see where all the deficiencies are. Mayor Gold thanked City Administrator M. Robson and all the Committee Members for working diligently on this important aspect of the City of Beacon to be prepared in case of a Disaster. Council Member Pasti requested that all Council Members be updated with phone numbers, who to call in the event of a Disaster.

Special Use Permit:

Artist Live/Work Spaces – Hanna Lane (310 Fishkill Avenue former Tallix Site – Applicant IG4, LLC - Lee Balter) – **Public Hearing Set for Monday, November 2, 2009.**

City Attorney R. Wolf stated that this has been to the Planning Board. All Council Members were satisfied with this item going to the Council Meeting on Monday, November 2nd. Council would like to see visuals at the Council Meeting, so they are familiar with where this Artist Live/Workspace will be.

Special Use Permit:

Bed & Breakfast – 300 South Avenue – Applicant – Yuan-Yuh Lee – **Public Hearing Set for Monday, November 2, 2009.**

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City Attorney R. Wolf stated that this has been to the Planning Board. Mayor Steve K. Gold asked Mr. Wolf if the Council was involved with the issue of the driveway easement. No the Council would not have to make a decision regarding this issue; it would be the planning board determination, which would be subject to approving this Special Use Permit.

Council Member Pasti again, stated that she would like to see plans, visuals of this Special Use Permit. City Administrator will ask the Planning Department to have these plans available at the Council Meeting Public Hearing Segment.

Delavan Avenue Subdivision Maintenance Bond

The City received a letter from Lanc & Tully requesting the following:

At this time, Metro Park Developers is requesting the release of Maintenance Bond that is currently in place for the public infrastructure improvements that were constructed as part of the Delavan Avenue Subdivision extension. At this time all outstanding items have been addressed, per them, and it is therefore our recommendation the maintenance bond for this project is released.

Council Member Casale asked if this developer (Metro Park) will be reimbursing the City for the Beautification of the Island, and letting the City know where are the utility boxes before the maintenance bond is released he would like this to be addressed.

Mayor Steve K. Gold agreed that the Developer did state that they would beautify this Island. Council Member Leake also remembers the Developer stating that they would beautify this Island. M. Robson was asked to check on this, and this would be brought back to the next workshop.

Taxi Cab Ordinance:

City Attorney prepared the Taxi Cab Ordinance for the City which was derivative from the City of Newburgh Taxi Cab Ordinance. Council Member Casale stated that there were many misspelled words which need to be corrected.

Taxi Cab drivers were in attendance which each was giving a “working copy” of this ordinance. A gentleman took many copies to distribute to other Cab Drivers.

City Attorney stated that this is not yet ready for Public Hearing purposes, again what this is, is a work in progress. The Taxi Cab Drivers will look this document over and come back to another workshop to discuss their findings and/or suggestions.

They did bring up the fee schedule. This would have to be appropriate for the City of Beacon. In addition, they would like to have it in the law that only a certain amount of taxi cab hack licenses be distributed.

Mayor Gold asked if someone could please find out if the fee is still \$6.00 to go to Newburgh. This fee is also affected by the increase in gas prices.

Council Member Thompson stated that the Council tried to address this many years ago, and the Taxi Drivers will have to set the standards and bring them back to the Council for discussion.

Council Member Casale asked if there are Senior Discounts. This will also be addressed.

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Mayor Steve K. Gold questioned the \$1.00 per five minutes to wait for someone, along with NO blowing your horn.

Council Member Casale stated that in the ordinance it states prepay. This will remain the same, using discretionary on the clientele.

Council Member Casale brought up the fact that during the day one person can find many cabs, but during the evening/night time hours there are none to be found. Council Member Casale suggests that at least one taxi cab be waiting at the train station every time a train stops in Beacon.

Mayor Steve K. Gold stated that this would be revisited at the next workshop.

Trap Neuter & Release Stray Felines

There have been many complaints from constituents regarding colonies of stray felines. This problem has not been addressed in the past, but has been brought to the attention of the Council. We are in a crisis state for one reason the economy. People just cannot take care of their cats so they are releasing them or dropping them off in other neighborhoods. It was noted that a female felines can become pregnant at the age of three months. Then those kittens at three months will have babies.

Nicole Ganas, a Beacon resident and certified to trap neuter and release. Joan Trombini, President, Founder of P.A.N.T. which is a not for profit organization which was formed in 2001, until recently P.A.N.T. was strictly an adoption agency, but this organization changed their mission to help out areas where there are colonies of stray cats. These two women were present this evening to submit a proposal for “Trap Neuter Return: Developing an Effective Strategy for the Permanent Reduction of Feral and Stray Cat Populations in Beacon.

In Dutchess County there are four organizations who do have adoption service. 1) P.A.N.T., 2) Dutchess County SPCA, 3) Mid Hudson Animal Aid and 4) ARF. There are many cats that are adopted out, but many turned away and let loose in neighborhoods.

Steve Tardif of the Animal Rights Alliance (T.A.R.A.)

There are two phases. The first phase will begin in January and looking to target approximately two hundred cats in a year. I am a Beacon resident and I am certified to trap neuter and release.

A successful TNR program will surely require more than the \$5,000 you and I have discussed as part of the plan to and for approval by City Council. While \$5,000 is a great deal of money and a terrific start to a program, it pretty much would cover just the expense of sterilization; there are other costs to consider like supplies (traps, food for holding and recovery space, etc.). I'll outline in detail everything involved with a TNR program in the RFP, but wanted to briefly mention some things to consider so that you have a realistic understanding of the scope of the project. Ongoing fund raising efforts will definitely be required. The Humane Society of the United States produced a great film about TNR. It's brief but highly informative, and will give you a firm sense of the fundamental elements of a successful TNR program.

I will essentially be working as a satellite representative of the organization to coordinate the TNR project in Beacon. It is my understanding that based on current discussion and pending definition, the TNR effort will be an alliance between P.A.N.T., T.A.R.A. and The City of Beacon in cooperation with other participating organizations and individuals.

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Mayor Steve Gold questioned what type of traps is used. It was confirmed that they only use safe traps which the cat will remain in the trap (cage) until the time of neutering.

The plan is to set up a plan to trap which typically takes two to three days. After that a space would have to be located to perform the surgical procedure, (which should be big enough to hold four six foot tables) the cats are cared for while they are recuperating and then released to a caregiver, so they can be cared for thereafter without having more kittens. From start to finish it is about one week. Note: The average life time span for a stray cat is three to five years.

Volunteers will be trained prior to this program starting. There are many needs for volunteers, such as trapping, cleaning the cages, feeding, transporting, etc. We do train the caretakers after they are returned on how to keep the cats healthy and safe.

Council Member Fredericks asked if this is free of charge or what is the cost. Nicole explained the fees will be split between the City of Beacon and P.A.N.T. which would be approximately \$5,000.

Funding

The program is to be divided into two (6) month phases, with Phase I to commence in January 2010 and Phase II in July 2010. Program costs will be split between P.A.N.T. and the City of Beacon. All costs are based on a minimum of 30 cats trapped per TNR effort. A dedicated P.A.N.T. Coordinator will oversee each TNR project to ensure the integrity of policy and procedures. It is fully expected that the City of Beacon will provide funding to continue the proposed TNR program, ensuring that all new cats that may appear in the community are properly sterilized, vaccinated and managed. Failure to continue to fund a long-term program will result in the failure of this project and the restoration of the cat population back to its current numbers.

Budget Proposal for the Beacon TNR Program

Phase I TNR Budget

January 2010 through July 2010

	P.A.N.T	City of Beacon
Humane Traps (15)	\$750	
Plastic Folding Tables 6' (4)	\$120	
Food and Miscellaneous Supplies	\$375	
Coordinator Fee *		\$899
Coordinator Travel Expenses		\$150
Sterilization and Rabies Vaccine With Ear Tip For 90 Cats **		\$4,050
Educational Material Production and Distribution	\$1,500	
Printed Fundraising Material	\$200	
Total Phase I TNR Costs	\$2,945	\$5,199

* Coordinator is paid \$11.00 for each cat trapped

** Fee for sterilization, rabies vaccine and ear tip is \$45 per cat

Phase II TNR Budget

July 2010 through December 2010

	P.A.N.T	City of Beacon
Food and Miscellaneous Supplies	\$375	
Coordinator Fee *		\$899
Coordinator Travel Expenses		\$150
Sterilization and Rabies Vaccine With Ear Tip For 90 Cats **	\$1,500	\$2,550
Total Phase I TNR Costs	\$1,875	\$3,699

* Coordinator is paid \$11.00 for each cat trapped

** Fee for sterilization, rabies vaccine and ear tip is \$45 per cat

Grand Total TNR Program Costs 2010 \$4,820 \$8,898

The City will be seeking donations to help this cause. This will also be discussed further at a future workshop.

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Cablevision Equipment

It was described that the Beacon High School Video Equipment is no longer being used as it is old and no longer works.

The City is contemplating on buying equipment to have Channel 22 available for all constituents, who will cost approximately eight or nine thousand dollars, and eventually Cablevision will pay for half.

There are daily expenses to keep this updated at all times. All Council Members were in favor of purchasing this equipment.

Colleen Swift, Executive Assistant to Mayor Gold, will be responsible for updating and loading the Video's of the Council Meeting every other week. This would be a savings of \$5,000. This is a trial effort, whereas, Colleen will be trained on how to operate the equipment. It was noted that the City has to buy new equipment as the school equipment is antiquated and not working properly. It was the consensus of the Council to have Colleen Swift in charge of keeping Channel 22 up to date.

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Sales Tax

This resolution will be brought to the Council Meeting of November 2, 2009

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WHEREAS, the City of Beacon's ("Beacon") sales tax agreement, by which Beacon received certain sales tax revenue transmitted from Dutchess County's collected sales tax, expired three years ago; and

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WHEREAS, Beacon has relinquished the right to impose a city sales tax, the effect of which has allowed Towns in Dutchess County to receive a greater sum of sales tax revenue from the County at the expense of Beacon; and

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WHEREAS, Beacon is in great need of additional revenue to meet basic City needs; and

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Whereas, sufficient reasons exist for Increasing the sales tax revenue received from the County to Beacon including (a) Towns In Dutchess County presently unfairly receive significant sales tax revenues from the County because Beacon and the City of Poughkeepsie have relinquished collecting a City sales tax; (b) the expiration of the sales tax agreement with the County three years ago has resulted in no percentage increase in sales tax revenue to Beacon since the agreement's expiration; (c) there is no present formula for increasing Beacon's percentage of sales tax revenue from the County;

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NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED Beacon requests the Dutchess County Legislature to (a) authorize a one (1) percent increase annually in County sales tax revenue to Beacon and (b) authorize additional increases measured by annual increases in the City's population.

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It was noted that Towns and Villages cannot charge Sales Tax, but Cities can. The City of Beacon can charge their own sales tax, as well as the City of Poughkeepsie.

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Workshop Meeting of October 26, 2009 was adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Swift

October 26, 2009