

**ORIGINAL**

VOL 0198 PAGE 126

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VERBATIM PROCEEDINGS

WEST HARTFORD TOWN COUNCIL

RE: ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A PERMANENT  
COMMISSION ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

WEST HARTFORD TOWN HALL  
50 SOUTH MAIN STREET  
WEST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06107

POST REPORTING SERVICE  
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HEARING RE: ORDINANCE  
November 13, 2007

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1 . . .Verbatim Proceedings of a hearing  
2 before the West Hartford Town Council in the matter of an  
3 Ordinance establishing a permanent Commission on  
4 Veterans' Affairs held on November 13, 2007 at 6:45 p.m.  
5 at the West Hartford Town Hall, 50 South Main Street,  
6 West Hartford, Connecticut. . .  
7  
8  
9

10 MAYOR SCOTT SLIFKA: Mr. Spada, could you,  
11 please, read the subject matter?

12 MR. ART SPADA: I can, Mr. Mayor.  
13 Ordinance establishing a permanent Commission on  
14 Veterans' Affairs.

15 MAYOR SLIFKA: Thank you, Mr. Spada. Mrs.  
16 Cronin, could we have a roll call, please?

17 (Whereupon, roll call was taken.)

18 MAYOR SLIFKA: Thank you, Mrs. Cronin.  
19 This is Council generated, so there is no applicant or  
20 presentation. All nine members of the Council have  
21 sponsored this ordinance. In brief what it would do is  
22 establish a permanent Commission on Veterans' Affairs  
23 that as drafted would consist of seven members who would  
24 be appointed by the Town Council. It would in that

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HEARING RE: ORDINANCE  
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1 manner operate much like the other Boards and Commissions  
2 that the town appoints folks to such as the Town Plan and  
3 Zoning Commission, to the Advisory Commission with -- for  
4 Persons with Disabilities.

5 We, at the Council level, would hope that  
6 this would serve two general purposes. One is to help  
7 keep us apprised of any efforts that we can undertake in  
8 forms of tax relief and other programs that are made  
9 available by the state for what I call are our  
10 traditional veterans, those whose service may have  
11 concluded long ago.

12 And then also those who are returning home  
13 right now, which brings us to the second piece of this,  
14 which is the kind of open ended area, is that we've --  
15 our relationship with veterans has been somewhat static  
16 for the last, I'd say, 15, 20 maybe even longer years in  
17 that we've known who are the veterans are, we've known  
18 what their -- what their needs have been and we've been  
19 able to work with them directly or through the Veterans'  
20 Affairs office, the federal Veterans' Affairs office to  
21 help meet those needs here in West Hartford.

22 But what we've been sensing is that we're  
23 now -- we've got a lot of new veterans in town. This is  
24 not something we've seen. And that maybe the needs that

HEARING RE: ORDINANCE  
November 13, 2007

1 they face are a little bit different than the ones we've  
2 seen recently. So what we want to do is just have this  
3 Advisory Commission to help keep us in front of that. We  
4 don't know what they're going to suggest yet, but the  
5 idea is that they will come to us on a somewhat regular  
6 basis and advise us of what we can do to help  
7 those veterans, perhaps help the families if necessary.

8 The idea is also, although it's not  
9 codified this way, I think the sense of the Council is  
10 that we would like to have a diversity of veterans that  
11 would serve on the Commission, you know, from those who  
12 may have served in World War II or since to those who  
13 have served in the recent conflicts, and to also include  
14 people who are families of service members and they may  
15 be able to provide that perspective.

16 So that's the general concept. I want to  
17 say I'm very pleased that -- especially this -- I would  
18 like to say that we planned it this way. We did not. The  
19 timing is just fortuitous that this is being done around  
20 Veteran's Day and that I did have the opportunity to  
21 speak with a number of our veterans about the idea and we  
22 appreciate their support.

23 One suggestion that I'm going to have, Mr.  
24 O'Brien, a question on is that as drafted we envisioned

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HEARING RE: ORDINANCE  
November 13, 2007

5

1 this having seven members. We have had such a great  
2 response to people who were interested in serving on the  
3 Commission that I think moving up to nine is probably  
4 appropriate. If we go to 11 we start to run in,  
5 generally speaking we -- our experience is when we start  
6 to run into quorum problems it's harder to manage. But  
7 for purposes of maybe changing the ordinances, drafted is  
8 that something we could do at the table tonight or do we  
9 need to refer it back for another hearing?

10 MR. JOSEPH O'BRIEN: To increase from  
11 seven to nine members probably would not be a substantial  
12 change in the ordinance so you could do that tonight at  
13 the table, if you choose.

14 MAYOR SLIFKA: Thank you. That would be  
15 my suggestion, but that's something we would have to take  
16 up in the actual Council meeting when we would debate and  
17 vote on this.

18 Does anybody else have anything at this  
19 time? Okay. We have the sign up sheet and nobody has  
20 signed up. So is there anybody who wishes to speak to  
21 this particular ordinance tonight? Okay. Well, we're  
22 moving quickly then.

23 One last chance for the Council. Dr.  
24 Thornberry? Yes, we want just to clarify, Dr. Thornberry

HEARING RE: ORDINANCE  
November 13, 2007

1 raises a good point. If there is -- this does appear on  
2 the Council agenda later tonight because we have to vote  
3 on it, but it is subject to a public hearing because it's  
4 an ordinance. So if you don't speak to it now you would  
5 not be able to speak to it at the public forum section of  
6 the actual Council meeting. So if there happens to be  
7 somebody who thought they could speak later on it,  
8 please, come up now. But I don't see anybody jumping up.  
9 So thank you for raising that. I hope I haven't confused  
10 everybody at this point.

11 Seeing no further comments then, we will  
12 close the 6:45 public hearing and we'll be back to begin  
13 the regular Council meeting in just a couple of minutes.  
14 Thank you.

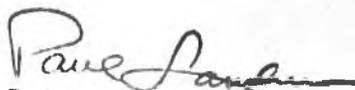
15 (Whereupon, the hearing was adjourned at  
16 8:00 p.m.)  
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**CERTIFICATE**

I, Paul Landman, a Notary Public in and for the State of Connecticut, and President of Post Reporting Service, Inc., do hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing record is a correct and verbatim transcription of the audio recording made of the proceeding hereinbefore set forth.

I further certify that neither the audio operator nor I are attorney or counsel for, nor directly related to or employed by any of the parties to the action and/or proceeding in which this action is taken; and further, that neither the audio operator nor I are a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties, thereto, or financially interested in any way in the outcome of this action or proceeding.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and do so attest to the above, this 26th day of November, 2007.

  
Paul Landman  
President

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