

ORDINANCE COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 5, 2022, 5:30 P.M.
Meeting Room 3, Lower Level
Bristol Public Library, 5 High St., Bristol, CT

DRAFT

ATTENDEES: Susan Tyler, Cheryl Thibeault, Jacqueline Olsen
ABSENT: - - -
STAFF PRESENT: Thomas Conlin, Assistant Corporation Counsel
Richard Hart, Fire Chief
Sharon Krawiecki, Certified Republican Registrar of Voters
Jeffrey Caggiano, Mayor (via Zoom)
COUNCIL MEMBER: Andrew Howe (via Zoom)

1. The Ordinance Committee was called to order at 5:34 p.m. by Council Member Tyler.
2. Approval of Minutes

Cheryl Thibeault made a motion to approve the minutes of March 1, 2022 meeting seconded by Jacqueline Olsen. All present voted in favor – motion passed.

3. Public Participation

- Jodie Bechard, 140 Woodland St.
Ms. Bechard spoke about air quality issues and provided some written information.

4. Old Business

- a. Report from public hearing Sec. 7-18, Inspection of Fire Suppression Equipment

No one spoke at the public hearing.

Jacqueline Olsen made a motion that the Ordinance in Sec. 7-18 be sent to City Council for adoption. Cheryl Thibeault seconded the motion, all present voted in favor. Motion passed.

- b. Update on air quality issues

Attorney Conlin reported that he had the opportunity to discuss this with the air quality people at DEEP and the reiterated that they do have a field staff which does the inspections and that they do have the standards which have been adopted by the regulatory authority which is DEEP here in Connecticut. They did say that air quality standards are for the most part state-based, that they do rely on the EPA but most of these are state by state. Changes in the statutes at the federal level take years to implement because they would have to go through each of the 50 states for adoption so normally they start at the state level and then move to a regional level then go on to the national level. He was provided with some information which is probably information we already have, such as the threshold limits coming from the smokestack. What people have been asking for is either to change those or have more frequency in the data collection analysis and that is something that would have to take place at the state level.

Tom had no information on the approval of the permit just on the air quality standards.
General discussion.

Susan Tyler said that we are still gathering research.

Cheryl Thibeault said she would like to see the state regulations and the local regulations and make a comparison.

c. Report from Registrar's Office – new voting district descriptions

Sharon Krawiecki has distributed draft boundaries. She provided details on the locations for Council District 1 and Council District 2. The State has changed 210 streets. They have redrawn what is noted in Section 635. She summarized the main changes and these were shown on maps. The Council Districts remain the same – they are just renumbered.

She asked that they accept the new boundaries and move on to City Council. She reviewed the number of voters. Mr. McCauley is available by phone for questions. She answered questions.

This is all set by State but needs to be approved and the date on the map needs to be removed and needs to be voted on by Charter.

Cheryl Thibeault made a motion to accept the changes and send to City Council. Jacqueline Olsen seconded the motion, all voted in favor and the motion passed.

5. New Business

a. Flag flying proposal

Susan Tyler reviewed the request from the last meeting: That the Ordinance Committee take up an ordinance that would limit city owned/government owned properties to only have governmental flags flown on its flagpoles. If that was not considered appropriate then the other request was to have a fair consistent policy so that all flags could be flown. Cheryl added that his topic was also discussed at Public Works, originally in September of 2021 but was not acted upon. Many requests have been received to fly flags. Public Works does the maintenance of the flagpoles so that's why the request for a policy was sent there. The Public Works board has looked at another town's policy and felt that this should be sent to either Charter or Ordinance with a recommendation that because we are a governmental agency that only certain flags be flown – American flag, State flag, and the City flag would be the only flags allowed to be flown with an exception for the boulevard where some veteran flags could be flown. The veteran flags could be discussed further with the veteran's organizations.

There is one case pending in the Boston Supreme Court but this may take a while so Bristol wants to move forward with a policy. Susan Tyler said that this will be discussed at the City Council meeting but should be decided in Ordinance. There will be more input. Susan Tyler read the basic guidelines which is being proposed by City Council which is the U.S. Flag, the State of Connecticut flag, and the City of Bristol flag be the only flags flown on City maintained flagpoles. They are not expected to make a decision tonight. Discussion.

Jacqueline Olsen and Cheryl Thibeault offered comments. Cheryl would still like allowances for veteran and armed services flags on the boulevard. The consensus was to keep it simple and limited to governmental flags. Cheryl added that the school district will set their own policy.

Susan would like to see what the Supreme Court decides. Should this be sent to City Council for May? This committee would have time to make it more precise. They would need to have a conversation with the veterans and the Board of Education. Discussion.

Cheryl read a policy from another town and will reach out to the veterans with that language. Cheryl will send information to Andrew Howe who is meeting with the veterans tomorrow (Wednesday). Mayor Caggiano (via chat) said “We can get input from the Vets, but I think the term we can use is “military flags” can be flown at the discretion of Veterans Council.” Council Member Howe (via chat) said “I will bring this topic up with the Veterans Council as the liaison.”

This will come back to Ordinance in May and go to City Council for Public Hearing.

b. Discussion of ATV and off-road vehicle noise, trespass

Susan Tyler reported that Chief Gould could not attend the meeting today. She provided an overview of the problem. The Police Department is working on it and it has been difficult but the problem had subsided in the reported area. The public have taken videos and some arrests have been made. However, this problem is expected to continue with the warmer weather.

Chief Gould is reviewing the Ordinance in other towns as well to see what can be done to strengthen our Ordinance and is working with State Attorney’s office to be sure we can strengthen Bristol’s policy (actions).

6. Committee Member Comments – There were no member comments.

7. Adjournment

Cheryl Thibeault made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:19 p.m. seconded by Jacqueline Olsen. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Cooper
Recording Secretary