

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING OF THE AGAWAM CITY COUNCIL

JANUARY 4, 2010

Councilor Rheault – Welcome to the Regular Council Meeting of the 4th of January which is an organizational meeting. I will ask the Council to please stand so we can start by taking our oath issued by Richard Theroux.

City Clerk Richard Theroux – Thank you very much ladies and gentlemen. It is my pleasure this evening to administer the oath of office for the Council. On Sunday at this location at the Agawam Middle School at 12:00 will be the ceremonial swearing in for the Council, School Committee and Mayor Cohen. I hope that certainly the public will come and enjoy the festivities that we have and certainly take part in the ceremonial swearing in but at this time it is my pleasure to swear in the Council and if you would please raise your right hand and repeat after me, stating your name after each stanza. *I, state your name, do solemnly swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and will support the Constitution thereof so help me God. I, state your name, do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of Councilman for the Town of Agawam and will faithfully and impartially discharge and perform all the duties incumbent upon me to the best of my ability so help me God. I, state your name, do solemnly swear to preserve and protect and uphold the laws of the Town of Agawam, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the United States of America so help me God. I, state your name, do solemnly swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States of America and will support the Constitution thereof so help me God. Congratulations! (APPLAUSE)*

Item 1. Citizen's Speak Time

Councilor Rheault – Thank you Richard. We have one citizen wishing to address the Council this evening.

Alan Griffin – Hi. My name is Alan Griffin. I live at 104 North Street in Agawam and so forth. I've been a resident of Agawam all my life and so forth. I'm just kind of wondering things and you know and I've been doing a lot of thinking about this town and so forth, right? You know we got too many council people on the Council. You got eleven people? That's \$111,000.00 we're spending on your wages just to sit up here on the Council. I think that's a little ridiculous. I think our Council should you know narrow down to like three, four people and so forth on the Council. You know, why have eleven people and spending all our money up? You know? We could use our money in other taxes, in other places and so forth. You know, there's other things that it could be used for, you know what I mean? Things gotta be changed in this town. There should be a lot of changing in this town and we ain't getting it. We ain't getting nowhere. We're just paying out money to have you people sit up on the Council which is absolutely ridiculous. I know you're probably all mad at me for saying this but you know I'm just telling the truth, you know? This is money going out the window. You know, we need a change in this Council. We need many a changes. Understand what I'm saying? Things

should be straightened out and things should be changed. You know? I hope you people don't all hate me for it, you know but I'd rather speak right out and tell you right out. That's \$111,000.00 going out the window every year. So that's something that you want to think about, you know? We don't need eleven people to, you know, to think of one idea. We need three people on the Council – you know one to say yes and the other two to say no. Why do we need eleven people? To spend our money out like that? That's ridiculous, you know? There's a way of saving money for our town, well we're getting too many people. Why not make it a volunteer council? Understand what I'm saying? You know, it'd be better if we turned it into a volunteer Council. I'm sure there's a lot of people that would come out or draw names out of a hat or something. We're hey it's your duty as a person to come up and serve on the Council for one day or something like that. This way, hey, there's not gonna be crookedness done on the Council and all that stuff. Understand what I'm saying? I don't want to mention no names but there's a lot that I know about this Council. I have councilmens calling me up and telling me this and telling me that and I'm not gonna mention the Councilmen that's on the Council here but they filled me in quite a bit on some certain people on this Council. Understand? So things has gotta turn around and I'm gonna get right to the bottom of this and it's gonna be sooner or later. I'm just gonna take my time, you know, then I'm gonna drop the ball all in your laps. So I just want to let you know that. There's gotta be something done about this. This is absolutely wrong so you know it's up to you to do a little thinking about things you know? I mean it's pretty bad when a Councilman calls me up and tells me I'm not gonna say who it is or who she is you know there was two of them in fact that called me up and filled me in on you guys about stuff going on. Well, I'm gonna start nailing people and it's gonna be in time. I'm just gonna take my time. I'm not in no hurry.

Clerk – One minute please.

Alan Griffin – But I am gonna start nailing people down on it and I just want to let you know and that's all I got to say. So it's up to you to do some thinking about this, you know? All right. Have a nice day.

Councilor Rheault – Thank you Mr. Griffin.

Item 2. Roll Call

Councilor Rheault – Clerk, please call the roll.

ROLL CALL – 11 PRESENT, 0 ABSENT

Councilor Rheault – Eleven present, we have a full quorum.

Item 3. Moment of Silence and the Pledge of Allegiance

Councilor Rheault – Please rise for a moment of silence and Pledge of Allegiance.

Item 4. Minutes

None.

Item 5. Declaration from Council President

Councilor Rheault – By the way of explanation, the reason why I am sitting in the Chair this evening is being the eldest member of the Council, I have the distinct pleasure of running the first meeting when we reorganize.

Item 6. Presentation of Petitions, Memorials & Remonstrances

None.

Item 7. Report of Council Committees

None.

Item 8. Elections

Councilor Rheault – And we'll get right down to the first item.

1. **TE-2010-1** - Election of City Council President (*Six votes necessary*)

Councilor Rheault – Nominations are open to the floor. Councilor Mineo?

Councilor Mineo – Yea, I'd like to nominate Gina Letellier for President.

Councilor Rheault – Councilor Gina Letellier is nominated. Councilor Cichetti?

Councilor Cichetti – I'd like to nominate Councilor Don Rheault please.

Councilor Rheault – Councilor Donald Rheault has been nominated. Councilor Bitzas?

Councilor Bitzas – I move to close the nominations.

Councilor Rheault – Move to close nominations. All those in favor? Opposed? Nominations are closed. Any discussion on either one? If not, Clerk please call the roll and state the candidate of your choice. Six votes are required.

ROLL CALL – 5 LETELLIER (Councilors Bitzas, Letellier, Messick, Mineo, and Perry), 6 RHEAULT (Councilors Cichetti, Magovern, Rheault, Rossi, Simpson and Walsh)

Councilor Rheault – Five Letellier, six votes, you have elected ME! I'm a little speechless. (APPLAUSE) Thank you.

2. **TE-2010-2** - Election of City Council Vice President (*Six votes necessary*)

Councilor Rheault – Councilor Magovern?

Councilor Magovern – I'd like to nominate Robert Rossi.

President Rheault – Councilor Rossi has been nominated. I have two lights and I didn't see who was first. Councilor Simpson, I'll take you.

Councilor Simpson – Thank you. I'd like to put the name of Dennis Perry in.

President Rheault – Dennis Perry. Councilor?

Councilor Bitzas – Move to close nominations.

President Rheault – Councilor Bitzas moved to close. All those in favor of closing? Opposed? State the last name of the candidate. Clerk, please call the roll.

ROLL CALL – 6 ROSSI (Councilors Bitzas, Cichetti, Magovern, Rheault, Rossi and Walsh), 5 PERRY (Councilors Letellier, Messick, Mineo, Perry and Simpson)

President Rheault – Six Rossi and five Perry. We have elected as Vice President Councilor Bob Rossi. Congratulations Bob. (APPLAUSE) The next tradition is the selection of seating and Barbara do you want to? Okay, Dennis you can. Where Councilor Simpson is seat number one. Just one, just one please! (Selection of new seats) I don't get one and Councilor Walsh doesn't pick a seat. He is the eldest Councilman. For the benefit of Ray up in the camera booth, he'd like to find out where you're sitting so if you would please state Councilor Simpson? Well, let's put it this way, who's got number one

Councilor Letellier – Why don't you just go to your seat, it's easier?

President Rheault – Sure, just go right to your seat then I don't have to call them out. (Switching of seats) Okay, all set. The next Council meeting is going to be the day after the election, Wednesday, January 20th, just to let the Council know. Any problems?

Item 9. Public Hearings

None.

Item 10. Old Business

None.

Item 11. New Business

None.

Item 12. Any other matter that may legally come before the City Council.

President Rheault – I will start with Dennis in the opposite corner tonight.

Councilor Perry – The opposite corner, still on the corner again though I must say. Just real quickly I want to congratulate you Mr. President and Councilor Rossi, Vice President of the Council. I look forward to working with both of you in the upcoming two years to do the best we can for our community. I think this Council is gonna be solid. We're gonna have to be. There's a lot of challenges coming up before us in the upcoming year. We all know the budgetary restraints that are gonna be coming down to the town and we really have to work hard to do the best we can for the people who put us here. Thank you and congratulations.

President Rheault – Thank you. Councilor Letellier?

Councilor Letellier – Thank you. Congratulations to President and Vice President Rossi and I think we all know we have a difficult year coming ahead of us and the best thing we can do is work together as a whole unit. Good luck everyone.

President Rheault – Thank you. Councilor Messick?

Councilor Messick – Congratulations to both of you. I do look forward to working with everybody the next two years and I think one of the things that we can do is maybe be proactive and get started on some projects early such as the budget and really get involved in some other projects going on around town and not wait for it to come to us and so Happy New Year everybody!

President Rheault – Councilor Cichetti?

Councilor Cichetti – I'd just like to congratulate yourself and Councilor Rossi and I really do look forward to working along side everybody and looking forward to a great two years.

President Rheault – Thank you. Councilor Walsh?

Councilor Walsh – Congratulations to Councilor Rheault and Rossi. I look forward to working with everyone on the Council and hopefully we will have a productive year and our budget won't get slashed too much by the State.

President Rheault – All the way over to my right, Councilor Bitzas?

Councilor Bitzas – Thank you Mr. President. Congratulations on your new leadership. I hope we all work well together for betterment of our town and I would like to wish everybody a happy and healthy New Year. Thank you.

President Rheault – Thank you. Councilor Simpson?

Councilor Simpson – Thank you and congratulations to Don and Bob and congratulations to our new councilors to getting their first start and happy new year to everybody. Thank you.

President Rheault – Councilor Magovern?

Councilor Magovern – Again, ditto with the congratulations to Don and to Bob and I look forward to working with the both of you and I hope that as councilors when we work on our budget, we get the budget a little bit earlier so that we're hopefully part of the process of making up the budget so that we just don't sit here with a complete budget trying to figure out if we're gonna pass it or not pass it but can be part of the compilation of it and put it together in such a way that we'll have a budget that will save the town from too many hardships but still it's gonna be a tight year and we have to look forward to making it as useful as we can. Again, congratulations and I look forward to working with everybody. Thank you.

President Rheault – Councilor Mineo?

Councilor Mineo – Yup. I'd like to say congratulations to Don and Bobby. I look forward to working with you and everyone else on the Council.

President Rheault – Councilor Rossi?

Vice President Rossi – Yes, thank you. I am humbled and honored to have been elected and serve as your Vice President and to let you all know that I will be available any time anyone may need me, I would be more than happy to assist any way I can. And I think we all know what the challenges are the next couple of years and I think we have a good Council. I think we can work well together and I think we can solve the problems in the end what's best for Agawam and I look forward to it. Again, thank you.

President Rheault – First happy New Year to each and every one of you and all those in the viewing audience. Secondly, my sincere thanks for your showing of support for me taking the Chair again and I look forward to working with all of you. I will be meeting with Councilor Rossi and I would ask and humbly ask each of you for any of your preferences to any of the committee. We will do our best to put you where you feel that you can serve the town in the best interests. If there are duplications obviously it would be a different decision at that point. My policy has been as always to put at least someone in every chair so obviously we've got more committees than councilors so someone will have to share extra responsibilities but I think it's important that everybody have that responsibility and we work as a team and I look forward to the coming year. I think that it's gonna be a tough year that's challenging. Hopefully the experience of us that have been here for a while along with the bright ideas of our new councilors will put the town first and foremost. So I thank you again for your support and I look forward to

running that first meeting and I welcome all of your phone calls or emails whichever for any committee that you'd like to serve. All right? Thank you and I'll entertain a motion to adjourn. So moved by Councilor Perry, seconded by Councilor Rossi. All those in favor? Opposed? We're adjourned. Thank you and good evening.

Adjournment.