

**JUNE 22, 2016**  
**SPECIAL JOINT TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

The June 22, 2016 Special Joint Town Council Meeting between Scituate and Foster was called to order by Charles Collins, President of the Scituate Town Council, at the Scituate High School auditorium, 94 Trimtown Road, N. Scituate, Rhode Island, at 7:00 p.m.

The following members were present:  
**John L. Lewis, Jr., President**  
**Denise DiFranco, Vice President,**  
**Gordon Rogers, and**  
**Jon Restivo.**  
**Cheryl Hawes, excused**

Also present:  
Renee M. Bevilacqua, Town Solicitor  
Jane Christopher, Town Clerk  
Police Chief William Ziehl  
Aaron Marsland, Chief, Foster Center Fire  
Company  
Guenter Bay, Assistant EMA Director;  
Scituate Town Council  
David D'Agostino, Scituate Town Solicitor

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The initial meeting was opened by Scituate Council President Collins at 7:00 p.m.

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Town Clerk Margaret Long called the roll of the Scituate Council. Council President Collins opened the first agenda item, a public hearing /forum introducing Fire and EMS consultant William Kramer, of Kramer and Associates. Mr. Kramer was present to report on his company's study of Scituate's volunteer fire and EMS service providers, and to invite public input.

That public hearing closed at 7:19.

**II. NEW BUSINESS**

Foster Council President John L. Lewis, Jr. opened Foster's council meeting at 7:19 p.m.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**a. Discussion with Scituate Town Council Regarding Abandonment of Ponagansett and Hemlock Roads**

Scituate Council President Collins read a letter from the Providence Water Supply Board into the record, explaining why their representatives would not be attending the meeting that night. (Exhibit A)

John L. Lewis, Jr. spoke to concerns regarding the water supply board's proposed closure of Ponagansett and Hemlock Roads in Foster, portions of which are in Scituate. Closure of those roads would isolate and adversely affect the residents with longer emergency vehicle response time, a potential increase in insurance premiums and a decrease in property value. Mr. Lewis also referenced the Water Supply Board's locked road gates that the local emergency vehicles did not have shared keys for, and urged the Scituate Town Council to not agree to those road closures.

Foster Assistant EMA Director Guenter Bay spoke to his concerns regarding adverse access and egress issues on both of these shared town roads; and loss of the use of Ponagansett Road as a through-way from Route 6 to 102 should a weather emergency occur, forcing other road closures.

Mr. Bay also felt that any concerns of the Providence Water Supply Board regarding water pollution from runoff on Ponagansett and Hemlock Roads, was far less than any that regularly occurs from bridge areas on Routes 6 and

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**II. NEW  
BUSINESS  
PUBLIC  
HEARING**

**a. Discussion  
with Scituate  
Town Council  
Regarding  
Abandonment  
of Ponagansett  
and Hemlock  
Roads, cont.**

101 into feeder streams and the portions of the reservoir near Scituate village.

Council Vice-President Denise DiFranco read a letter from one Foster resident residing on Hemlock road. This resident expressed her concerns about the Hemlock Road closure limiting PWSB and police patrolling near her home, resulting in increased mischievous activity on the closed portion of the road, and limiting emergency exits.

Town Clerk Jane Christopher, a resident of Ponagansett Road, spoke to the same security and access concerns, and referenced past and present incidents on the road.

Scituate Town Clerk Margaret Long read a letter from a Scituate resident concerned about limiting access to the Barden Cemetery on Ponagansett Road, the location of his family cemetery plot. This individual has certain disabilities that would prevent him from walking any distance to visit the cemetery.

Council member Jon Restivo stated that Foster had not received any communication from the Providence Water Supply Board regarding the closure of Ponagansett and Hemlock roads, with any terms of negotiation as to what they might offer the Town of Foster in return for road closure. Mr. Restivo speculated that that could be due to the fact that the PWSB didn't have anything to hold over the town of Foster as coercion, such as they did with the town of Scituate (i.e., the ownership of the land under the Potterville Fire Station and the parking lot behind Scituate town hall).

Mr. Restivo reflected that the Water Supply Board was showing complete indifference to the residents of either town, which is nothing new; it has been going on for 100 years. The towns need to draw the line.

South Foster Fire Station chief Aaron Marsland spoke to his concerns in reaching residents on Hemlock and Ponagansett Road during a fire emergency, and having access to water as needed.

In addition, several people from Scituate inquired as to the PWSB's apparent disinterest in doing any impact studies regarding the effect that other road closures being proposed in Scituate would have on: school bus routes; detour routes around Scituate village during parades and the annual art festival, or any emergency situation (See Scituate Town Council minutes, Exhibit B).

Three motions were made and unanimously approved by the Scituate council:

- 1.) To appoint a committee to look into engaging a DC law firm with knowledge of eminent domain laws.
- 2.) To deny PWSB's request to close the roads mentioned in the Public Hearing.
- 3.) To close the public hearing.  
(See Scituate Town Council minutes, Exhibit B)

The public hearing closed at 8:29 p.m.

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**NEW**

**II. BUSINESS**

**b.) Discussion**

**with Scituate  
Town Council  
Regarding  
Police Station  
Facility**

Scituate Council President Collins stated that it had been brought to his attention that Foster needs to build a new police station. The Town of Scituate is facing a similar situation. One consideration that had been briefly discussed between Mr. Lewis and himself was the suggestion brought up by some people, to have a shared police station with the Town of Scituate. A joint RFP had been discussed.

Foster Council President John Lewis stated that Foster had convened a building committee to review options for a new station for Foster, and the Town Council was waiting for recommendations from that committee.

Councilman Jon Restivo, a member of that building committee, stated the committee was looking for any indication from the Town of Scituate that they were interested in a joint police station, before exploring that option in depth.

It was a consensus of the Scituate Council to hire a consultant to report on their police station needs before considering either a joint or separate police station. At their next regular council meeting, an RFP for a consultant would be on the agenda.

**III. ADJOURN-  
MENT**

Council president John L. Lewis, Jr. called for a motion to adjourn the Foster Council meeting.

Gordon Rogers moved, Denise DiFranco seconded, to adjourn the meeting.

John L. Lewis, Jr., aye; Denise DiFranco, aye; Gordon Rogers, aye; Jon Restivo, aye. Motion passed 4-0

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Members of the Scituate Town Council thanked the Foster Town Council and residents for coming to this meeting.

The Scituate Council adjourned their meeting at 8:37 p.m.

A digital sound file is made a part of the record for a complete account of the council meeting.

Submitted by,

Jane H. Christopher  
Town Clerk