

A **REGULAR MEETING** of the City Council Ordinance Committee was held in Room 215 of City Hall on Monday, January 2, 2018. Present were Chairman Gregg Cogswell, City Councilor Anne Ruwet, Corporation Counsel Jaime LaMere and Mayoral Aide Timothy Waldron. Councilor Cavagnero arrived at 6:15 p.m.

Chairman Cogswell called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

Minutes

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Cogswell, the minutes of the December 18, 2017 Ordinance Committee Meeting were unanimously accepted.

Public Comment

Councilor Cogswell opened the meeting up to public comment. He was asked what the Committee has come up with. Councilor Cogswell read aloud the content of the current draft.

Roger Fulton and Terry Campbell of White Pine Rd. described the stray bullets incidents, and explained what they would like to see for this ordinance.

Gary Stango, Vice President of Torrington Fish and Game, said that other than minor worries about the wording, his members have no objection to a gun safety ordinance. He noted that clay pigeon shooting uses the sky as a backdrop, but shotguns are used, which do not have the range that bullets do. Mr. Stango made suggestions for the ordinance and provided information to the Committee regarding various sports' ammunition options and their ranges.

Discussion on Updates to Ordinance Chapter 117 – Firearms

Councilor Cogswell asked if the Ordinance should include provisions on who is legally authorized to hunt and questioned liability. Atty. LaMere said the City's inspection of backstops creates a concern.

Councilor Ruwet said the current draft of the ordinance should not go forward, based on the recommendations of Torrington Fish and Game.

Councilor Cogswell said that the ordinance should not move forward as is if the backstops' width requirement, five acres or more landowner exemptions for clay pigeon shooting, or caliber limitations are in question.

Councilor Cavagnero noted that shooting sports controls are needed, that government regulation should be kept at a minimum, and that this issue is very complex. He agreed that this draft is not ready to move forward and asked that experts be invited to present more information, clarification and guidelines.

Councilor Ruwet said she felt this incident should have been treated as a criminal act, without the need for this ordinance, the like of which no other municipality has. She said she is uncomfortable with it as written, and that it will be difficult to pass especially without supporting data.

Councilor Cogswell said he would contact Chief Maniago for data and that he wants to see the best option put forward without restricting anyone's rights, yet providing safety on the surrounding properties. He pointed out that a compromise may lie in population density considerations. Councilor Cogswell asked Atty. LaMere about the City's liability should an incident occur after a backstop inspection. She replied that she would investigate possible sovereign immunities in limited circumstances.

On a motion by Councilor Ruwet, seconded by Councilor Cavagnero, the meeting was adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol L. Anderson, MMC