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Kristen Panzo TOWN CLERK

TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Robert F. Parisi Council Chambers

April 23, 2024

6:30 P.M.

RECORD OF VOTES & MINUTES

The Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, April 23, 2024 was called to order at 6:30 p.m. There was a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance was said. Councilors in attendance were Autumn Allinson, Craig Fishbein, Thomas Laffin, Christina Tatta, Samuel Carmody, Vincent Testa, Christopher Regan, Jesse Reynolds and Chairman Joseph A. Marrone III. Mayor Vincent Cervoni, Town Attorney Gerald E. Farrell Sr. and Town Clerk Kristen Panzo were also present.

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Consent Agenda
 - 3a. Consider and approve Tax Refunds totaling \$12,421.26 (#716- #734) Account # 1001001-41020- Tax Dept.
 - 3b. Consider and approve an Acceptance of Federal/State Highway Safety Grant "2023/2024 Comprehensive DUI Enforcement Program" Funds and an Appropriation in the amount of \$6,402 from Revenue Highway Safety, Acct. #1002001-45208 to Police Overtime, Acct. #10020050-51400- Police Dept.
 - 3c. Consider and approve an Acceptance of Overtime Reimbursement of Federal Taskforce funds and an Appropriation in the amount of \$2,763 from Misc. Revenue, Acct. #1009052-47040 to Police Overtime, Acct. #10020050-51400 Police Dept.
 - 3d. Consider and approve an Acceptance of Overtime Reimbursement of United States Secret Service Funds and an Appropriation in the amount of \$1,192 from Misc. Revenue, Acct. #1009052-47040 to Police Overtime, Acct. #10020050-51400- Police Dept.
 - 3e. Consider and approve an Acceptance of outside Private Contractor Work Funds And an Appropriation in the amount of \$150,000 from Outside Contractors, Acct. #10020050-51600 to Charges for Current Services, Acct. #1002001-46020- Police Dept.
 - 3f. Consider and approve a transfer in the amount of \$1,500 from Dues & Fees, Acct. #10010700-58810 to Offices Expenses Misc. Acct. #10010700-56100- Planning & Zoning

- 3g. Consider and approve a transfer in the amount of \$21,525 from Contingency-Misc. Exp, Acct. #10019000-58820 to Exp.- IT- Salary & Wages, Acct. #10010130-51000- Mayor
- 3h. Consider and approve the 2023-2024 budget transfer in the amount of \$12,000 From Title Distribution Maint-Maint of Street Light and Signal Syst, Acct. #596 to Title Distribution Operations-Street Light & Signal Exp., Acct. #585- Electric Division
- 3i. Consider and approve authorization for the Mayor to execute a Master Municipal Agreement for Construction Projects between the State of Connecticut and the Town of Wallingford for ten-year term- Engineering
- 3j. Consider and approve Council Resolution endorsing a Fair Housing Policy for The Town of Wallingford- Mayor
- 3k. Consider and approve Appropriation in the amount of \$2,300,000 from Rev-Telecommunication Tax, Acct. #1009050-41160 to Fire-Capital-Quint (\$1,700,000), Acct. #10020150-57000 and PW-Capital-Vacuum Truck (\$600,000), Acct. #1003000-57000-Mayor
- 3l. Consider and approve a Bid Waiver to replace a SD-5 Vacuum Truck-Sewer Division
- 3m. Consider and approve a Bid Waiver to prepare an update to the solids handling Improvements section of the Facility Plan for the Wallingford Water Pollution Control Facility- Sewer Division
- 3n. Consider and approve a modification to an existing Robinson Sales Bid Waiver- Electric Division
- 3o. Consider and approve a modification to an existing Milsoft Utility Solutions Bid Waiver- Electric Division
- 3p. Consider and approve Merit Review Board (2) - Human Resources
- 3q. Approve minutes of April 2, 2024 Special Town Council Meeting and April 9, 2024 regular Town Council Meeting

MOTION WAS MADE to approve Consent items 3a-3p.

MADE BY: TATTA

SECONDED BY: REGAN

ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR

4. **Items Removed from the Consent Agenda**

5. **PUBLIC QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD**

Mrs. Versaci of Platt Drive pleaded with the Town Council to not approve item #10.

Jason Michael of Meadow Street wanted to know if it was necessary for the Town of Wallingford to have two \$600,000 trucks. He also mentioned when will the public be getting wifi in the Town Council Chambers.

6. Discussion of old business- Chairman Marrone

6a. Update on Hidden Brook Lane Attorney Farrell stated that the Law Department provided revised easements to the developers attorney who has not been in his office, so they have not been able to speak with him. They provided him with a list of items they still need.

6b. Update on Technology Mayor Cervoni stated that Andrew Winters the nee Director of IT will be starting on May 6, 2024.

7. Discussion and possible action of Water Rate Changes- Water Division

Neil Amwake, Water/Sewer General Manager presented a power point presentation to the council. Rick Hendershot, Director of Public Utilities was also present.

Council Tatta questioned the slide pertaining to the meter sizes and the fact that the 10” drastically increased compared to the other sizes. Mr. Amwake explained that this customer knows about the increase and can certainly afford to pay the increase as this person’s business is well known and doing well.

Councilor Fishbein stated he was told that the Water Division was taking over all fire hydrants on private property. Mr Hendershot said that was incorrect and they will not be doing that. He is in favor of the water rate increases. He discussed in past years that they have not raised rates.

Councilor Testa stated that profits go into the reserve fund and not to shareholders. He agrees with the increases of the water rates. He discussed the reserve amount and the changes in rates.

Council Reynolds had a question about the service fee. He asked if the July 1 medium rates were consistent throughout the year or do they fluctuate. He asked about the service fees for the different size pipes.

Council Regan questioned the 10” rates and the amount that the rate went up. He questioned how competitive the 6”, 8” and 10” pipes are compared to other towns and water rates.

8. Discussion and possible action regarding advertisements in Town Parks and on Town Media, including the Town website- Vice-Chair Tatta

Councilor Tatta talked about the advertisements on the town website. She asked how did certain business get the chance to advertise on the website. She asked how the Town is going to handle a business being advertised that might be controversial to someone. She asked if businesses can advertise in parks or ball fields.

Councilor Fishbein wanted to know since the topic of advertising businesses on the town website never came up in a town council meeting where are the rules about this. Attorney Farrell said there is any agreement in the law department about this. He wanted to know why it was decided without council approve that there would be no revenue to the Town of Wallingford.

Councilor Regan asked about the Town of Wallingford being able to pull any videos for advertising businesses at any time.

Jason Michael of Meadow Street. He talked about the process about how to advertise in public parks. He thought it was a great idea for businesses.

Bob Gross of Long Meadow Street questioned who controls the videos on our Town website. He thinks the Town of Wallingford should be in charge of their own videos and not have an outside company do it.

9. Discussion regarding a draft RFP for the Historic Railroad Station Re-Use Project- EDC

Don Crouch, Economic Development Specialist asked if the council had any questions about the RFP.

Councilor Carmody is curious about how this RFP is being publicized. He asked who is determining the timeline.

**MOTION WAS MADE to approve Consent items #9.
MADE BY: TATTA
SECONDED BY: REGAN
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR**

Councilor Fishbein asked about the time line for the RFP. He asked about the Fire Marshall inspection time line.

**ROLL CALL
ALLINSON: AYE
CARMODY: AYE
FISHBEIN: AYE
LAFFIN: AYE
REGAN: AYE
REYNOLDS: AYE
TATTA: AYE**

TESTA: AYE
MARRONE: AYE
MOTION: PASSED

10. Consider and approve an Appropriation of ARPA Funds in the amount of \$1,091,000 from Revenue-Federal Grant, Acct. #2391002-45200 to ARPA-Municipal, Acct. #23940320-58830- Mayor

MOTION WAS MADE to approve Consent items #10.
MADE BY: TATTA
SECONDED BY: REGAN
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR

Mayor Cervoni stated that they reviewed the budget for items that might be able to be paid with ARPA funding. He went over a list of bug ticket items that can benefit from ARPA funding.

Council Tatta asked if this item will affect the proposed budget if this item passes.

Councilor Reynolds asked if these types of expenditures of over a million dollars is year to year or is this an one-time thing.

Councilor Laffin stated that every year the town is paying for some big ticket item like a fire truck or ambulance, so it is a reoccurring thing that happens every year.

Councilor Testa says every year the town has capital expenditures that they have to pay. He mentioned the BOE capital expenditures also.

Councilor Allinson wants to know why the discussion is happening now before the budget and can it be tabled till after the budget.

MOTION WAS MADE to table item #10 till after the budget.
MADE BY: ALLINSON
SECONDED BY: REYNOLDS

Councilor Tatta said some of these items in the past were not funded right away and some were even funded almost a year after the ask.

Councilor Fishbein talked about how this is a lot of money.

Bob Gross of Long Hill Road stated that the council can veto the Mayor's decision at any tie if they believe it is necessary.

ROLL CALL

ALLINSON: AYE

CARMODY: AYE

FISHBEIN: AYE

LAFFIN: AYE

REGAN: AYE

REYNOLDS: AYE

TATTA: NAY

TESTA: AYE

MARRONE: AYE

MOTION: PASSED

11. Discussion and possible action regarding funding and Lease for Adult Education Program \$498,196- BOE

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

12. Workshop Review of BOE Budget, Public Comment to be deferred to Public Hearing-
-Chairman Marrone

Danielle Bellizi, Superintendent, Marlo Roscoe, Chairman of BOE and Dominic Barrone spoke about the BOE budget and what they needed to fund all schools, staff, etc.

Councilor Carmody stated that the school budget is the largest part of the ton's budget. He wanted to know what was going on with the BOE budget. He suggests restoring some funding to their budget.

Councilor Allinson wanted to know if the capital items were also cut from the BOE budget.

Councilor Fishbein spoke about the health insurance benefit. He asked about the percentages of it and the break down. He asked about the cost of possibly going out to bid for the health insurance because it is so expensive. He had questions about the BOE budget.

Councilor Tatta asked if the BOE used the \$290,000 the council restored last year was it spent on what the council had requested to use that money for. Capital items and how they are funded was discussed. She asked about the salary line items in the BOE budget.

Councilor Reynolds states that BOE got an 80% increase from last year. The cuts would come from that 80% like salaries, health insurance, etc. He was trying to figure out where the cuts would be coming from. There was a discussion about the children who would not benefit from these cuts if teachers are cut.

Councilor Testa states that it is not the council's role to tell the BOE where to cut line items. He talked about the health insurance. He asked if the presentation that the BOE handed out included the loses or cuts that would happen. He asked if the money the BOE is short is there any items that are onetime expenses that the town can pay for.

Councilor Allinson talked about the tax increase if the BOE budget was restored to what they originally asked for. She talked about needing help with services in town. She also agrees that the BOE budget should be restored somewhat.

Councilor Regan talked about the State reductions and asked the BOE how that would be affecting them.

Councilor Marrone believes the BOE will be in the same boat, asking for more money next year. He asked if the money should be restored now or has this same discussion next year.

Councilor Laffin explained why the BOE has budget cuts. He talked about the tax increase from previous years compared to the tax increase for this year. To fully fund the BOE budget the tax increase would be very high from previous years.

13. Brief discussion regarding Council desire and schedule for a budget motions meeting
-Chairman Marrone

Councilor Marrone said that May 7, 2024 is available for the motions meeting.

14. Executive Session pursuant to Section 1-200 (6) (D) of the Connecticut General Statutes with respect to the purchase, sale and/or leasing of property –Mayor

MOTION WAS MADE to go into Executive Session at 10:10pm.

MADE BY: TATTA

SECONDED BY: ALLINSON

ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR

Present in Executive Session were all nine Councilors, Mayor Cervoni, Tim Sena Comptroller, Jerry Farrell Jr., Dominic Barrone, Danielle Bellizi, Marla Roscoe, Rajan Doering, Caroline Raynis, Maureen Reed, Mike Votto, Donna Regan, Jennifer Passaretti, Melanie Rosacci, Mark Deptula, Fran Thompson and Carrie Latorre.

MOTION WAS MADE to come out of Executive Session at 10:38pm.

MADE BY: TATTA

SECONDED BY: ALLINSON

ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR

The meeting adjourned at 10:41 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristen Panzo
Town Clerk

Meeting digitally recorded

Joseph A. Marrone III, Chairman

Date

Kristen Panzo, Town Clerk

Date