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AT 4:30 pm AND RECEIVED BY

TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONN. Vincent Cervoni TOWN CLERK

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Robert F. Parisi Council Chambers

May 28, 2024

6:30 P.M.

AMENDED RECORD OF VOTES & MINUTES

The Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, May 14, 2024 was called to order at 6:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. Councilors in attendance were 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., Comptroller Timothy Sena and Town Clerk Kristen Panzo were also present. Council Autumn Allinson was absent.

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Consent Agenda
 - 3a. Consider and approve Tax Refunds totaling \$6,404.87 (#770-#797)
Acct. #1001001- 41020 - Tax Collector
 - 3b. Acceptance of bequest from the estate of Patricia L. Franco as a donation to the Wallingford Animal Control – Mayor
 - 3c. Consider and approve authorization for the Mayor to execute a Master Municipal Agreement for Right of Way Projects between the State of Connecticut and the Town of Wallingford for a ten-year term - Engineering
 - 3d. Consider and approve revisions to the job description for Chemist – Water and Sewer Div. – Human Resources Dept.
 - 3e. Consider and approve acceptance of donation from “Pavilion of Hope” and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$200 from Revenue, Acct. #2505002-47152 to Donations Parks & Recreation, Acct. #25050050-58830-10174 – Parks & Recreation
 - (a) Consider and approve a Transfer of funds in the amount of \$500,000 from Exp.- New Debt Financing, Acct. #10070050-58590 to Transfer Out-CNR, Acct. #10080350-59232 – Public Works
 - (b) Consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$500,000 to Operating Transfer In, Acct. #3019053-49015 and to Exp. – Town Wide Paving, Acct. #30102024-57000-20086 – Public Works

- 3f. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$8,336 from Contingency Account, Acct. #10019000-58820 to TBD Capital-Printer, Acct. #10010700 - 57000-TBD – P&Z
- 3g. Consider and approve Bid Waiver Request for Total Communications to design, purchase and install phone systems – Police Dept.
- 3h. Consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$1,327.44 from Retained Earnings, Acct. #N/A to Water Uncollectable Accounts, Acct. #43100904 – Water Div.
- 3i. Consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$40,000 from Retained Earnings, Acct. #N/A to Distribution Maintenance-Misc. Dist., Acct. #598 – Electric Div.
- 3j. Consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$100,000 from Retained Earnings, Acct. #N/A to Admin-Conservation Expense, Acct. #909 – Electric Div.
- 3k. Consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$115,284 to Interest & Dividend Income, Acct. #4190 and to Other Interest Expense, Acct. #431 – Electric Div.
- 3l. Consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$17,750 from Retained Earnings, Acct. #N/A to Pumping Expense, Acct. #46100623 – Sewer Div.
- 3m. Approve Minutes of May 14, 2024 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

3m was withdrawn from the agenda and item #15 was taken off the agenda.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD

Bill Comerford of Broadview Drive asked about the repair work that was done to the walls in the stairwell. He questioned why the repair work done to the stairwell walls is bubbling up. He asked if the repair men were paid for their work. Mayor Cervoni stated that there was an underlying problem and that is why the bubbling of the stairwell walls happened.

6. Discussion of old business – Chairman Marrone
 - (a) Update on Hidden Brook Lane
Attorney Farrell said Corporation Counsel Janis Small is meeting with the attorneys and will have more information after they meet.
7. Consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$149,332 from Opioid Settlement, Acct. #2504002-45200 to Opioid Settlement, Acct. #25040350-58830-10180 – Health Dept.

MOTION WAS MADE to approve item #7.
MADE BY: TATTA
SECONDED BY: FISHBEIN
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR

Mandy Miranda, Youth & Social Services Director and Vanessa Bautista, Health Director spoke To the council about the need to purchase Narcan Kits so they can have it as a backup to the Coalition for a Better Wallingford.

Chairman Marrone asked the question of spending \$90,000 on a part-time Social Worker. Ms. Miranda stated this position would be \$35 an hour and that it would be for two years. This person would be doing prevention work and counseling families and adults. He asked about the amount of Narcan kits that would be purchased and Ms. Bautista stated they would be purchased as needed. He is concerned that the Town of Wallingford maybe purchasing too much Narcan kits because they have a shelf life of four years.

Councilor Fishbein asked about the \$26,232 on the backup information they received. Ms. Bautista stated that part of the money is for the Community Health Improvement Plan. That is where most of this money will be going she said. He asked about who would be doing this Improvement Plan.

Councilor Tatta asked after the two years is up what happens to the part-time position. Ms. Miranda stated they would have to assess the situation. The question was asked if the \$90,000 and this position was originally in the budget and Ms. Miranda said it was not. The question of the Narcan kits came up again and the council wants to make sure that YSS and the Health Department are not duplicating what the Coalition for Better Wallingford is doing with the Narcan kits. Ms. Bautista said they will coordinate with them to do training and things like that.

Councilor Fishbein asked if they can get an inventory of what department has Narcan kits and how many the town actually has. He thinks that YSS should have Narcan kits out of all of the departments who have it now.

Councilor Regan asked if the town is better off having too much or not enough Narcan seeing how there is a shelf life of four years.

**MOTION WAS MADE to approve Chairman Marrone to meet with Mayor Cervoni and former Chief Stredwell to have a discussion to bring back to the council at a later date with more information.
MADE BY: MARRONE
SECONDED BY: LAFFIN**

ROLL CALL

**ALLINSON: absent
CARMODY: AYE
FISHBEIN: AYE
LAFFIN: AYE
REGAN: AYE
REYNOLDS: AYE
TATTA: AYE
TESTA: AYE
MARRONE: AYE
8- AYE
0- NAY
MOTION: PASSED**

8. Discussion and possible action regarding Collective Bargaining Agreement between Town of Wallingford and UPSEU Local 424-17 Management effective from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2026 – Human Resources

Jim Hutt, Director of IT went over the contract and asked the councilors if they had any questions.

9. Consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$350,000 to Revenue - Federal Grant, Acct. #2391002-45200 and to ARPA-Municipal Pond Hill Boilers, Acct. #23940320-58830-TBD – Finance

**MOTION WAS MADE to approve item #9.
MADE BY: TATTA
SECONDED BY: FISHBEIN
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR**

Councilor Carmody asked Mr. Sena how much ARPA money the town has left. Mr. Sena said if this item gets approved just under \$950,000.

Councilor Fishbein stated that this item is to fix and replace the boilers at Pond Hill School. He wanted the general public to know that.

ROLL CALL

**ALLINSON: absent
CARMODY: AYE
FISHBEIN: AYE**

LAFFIN: AYE
REGAN: AYE
REYNOLDS: NAY
TATTA: AYE
TESTA: AYE
MARRONE: AYE
7- AYE
1- NAY
MOTION: PASSED

10. Executive Session pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-200(6)(B) regarding strategy and negotiations with respect to a pending claim in the matter of *Ford Motor Company and Town of Wallingford Department of Police Services – Law Dept.*

MOTION WAS MADE to approve to go into Executive Session for Items #10 and #12 at 6:50 p.m.

MADE BY: TATTA

SECONDED BY: FISHBEIN

Attendance for item #10, all councilors except Allinson (absent). Mayor Cervoni, Town Attorney Gerald Farrell, Sr.

Attendance for item #12, all councilors except Allinson (absent), Mayor Cervoni, Superintendent Danielle Belizzi, Dominic Barone-WPS Business Manager, Mike Votto- BOE Member, Adult Ed. Director Anthony Mangiafico, Ray Ross-BOE Member, Town Attorney Gerald Farrell, Sr.

11. Motion to consider and approve action regarding the pending claim as discussed in Executive Session – Law Dept.

MOTION WAS MADE to come out of Executive Session at 7:12pm

MADE BY: MARRONE

SECONDED BY: TATTA

MOTION WAS MADE to approve item #11

MADE BY: TATTA

SECONDED BY: FISHBEIN

12. 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

This item was combined with item #10.

13. Discussion and possible action regarding Simpson Court Outdoor Dining – Chairman

MOTION WAS MADE to approve item #13

Wallingford Town Hall, 45 South Main Street

MADE BY: TATTA
SECONDED BY: CARMODY

Mayor Cervoni stated that the town is aware of a desire to have the parking spaces in front of Geatano's going up north to the end of the parking lot to be used for outdoor dining. He stated that if council approves the lease of the parking spots they would cost \$150 per month for each parking space.

Councilor Laffin is in favor of this item so as long as there is some type of payment for the use spaces. He believes in government you cannot give town owned land to use without payment of sort in return. He is ok with the amount of money per space per month.

Councilor Fishbein asked where the money would go. Mayor Cervoni said it would go into the General Fund. He stated that the other businesses that do not have parking right in front of their building would be negatively impacted by this decision. He talked about the businesses renting their buildings and not being able to use the parking spots for themselves or their clients. He talked about the outdoor dining ordinance that was created in 2013.

Councilor Testa talked about the excitement people have for what is happening uptown. He discussed what it is that people are excited about. He described what outdoor dining is, sidewalk dining and parking lot dining is. He mentioned that out of the pandemic and outdoor dining came the fun stuff like the music night Wallingford has on Thursday nights. He asked is the Thursday night music dependent upon outdoor dining and having tables in the parking lot and take up eight spaces every day.

Councilor Tatta talked about how much it would cost for the placement of the block barriers. Public works said it would be about \$800 to put up the blocks and \$800 to take down the blocks each time. She says there is plenty of parking in town so that she is not worried about as much. She talked about the fairness aspect of the businesses. She talked about keeping things the same for this year and decide to do something next year.

Councilor Laffin mentioned how some residents were not in favor of the parking lot dining and asked to pull back on the sidewalk dining so that when people walk on the sidewalk they are not walking in and around people's tables. He talked about the fairness aspect because in essence the discussion is about expanding the square footage of a restaurant for profit.

Councilor Fishbein calculated the math as to how much it would cost for the eight parking spots Per month and the cost of public works to put up and remove the blocks for each month.

Councilor Carmody talked about the benefit of having the parking lot dining and how it benefits the Town of Wallingford.

Councilor Testa is not in favor of having the businesses pay an exorbitant amount of money just to have parking lot dining.

Councilor Laffin is against having the town absorb almost \$25,000 for the summer just so Public Works can put up blocks and remove them each day.

Mayor Cervoni said Public Works is down several positions, so having them show up to put up blocks and take them down possess a burden for their department. He said the council should consider the business that are willing to pay the lease for the parking spots before making a decision.

Councilor Reynolds appreciates the scene taking place in uptown. He thinks it is nice to have a place like that in town. He would like to pursue different ideas in the future that can be more beneficial and not so much in the way per say.

Councilor Tatta asked the mayor about a rumor she heard of having more block parties in town. Mayor Cervoni said that he has had conversation with the WCI about this summer starting monthly block parties one night a month and close Main Street to Church Street.

Robert Berckheart of Simpson Avenue said that family and the community is very important and this Thursday night event brings everyone together.

Ray Ross of Center Street said if you are going to charge one business for the parking spots then you would have to charge all businesses. It is only fair. He is the town photographer and on Thursday nights he sees all of the people having a good time dancing, laughing. Etc.

John Ross-DJ for the Thursday night event. His goal was to help the businesses in that spot meaning on Simpson Court because it was a prime spot for an evening event. He talked about how everything is going up in price from insurance to paying staff for the restaurants.

Joseph Mirra of Pequot Road believes that the council should let it continue this year and then next year figure out a good way to have this event continue. He talked about what this event does for the town and for businesses.

Lynn Ford of Putter Drive. She is the chaplain in Masonicare. She talked about what happens with Simpson Court when this event is taking place.

Bob of Tuttle Avenue suggested having the people who work at this businesses move their cars and park somewhere else you would have more parking spots to use.

Scot Gingras of North Colony Street works part time for DJ John Ross. He says he has people coming up to him even from out of town asking if Thursday night is still going to happen.

Victoria Neal said there was a petition with around 500 signatures on it. She surprised about the local businesses not being in support. She thinks this event should be seven days a week to be able to socialize.

Barbara Kapi of Demey Road asked for the total number of parking spots in Simpson Court. There are 33 total parking spots and she said about 25% of those parking spaces are affected by Geateno's Restaurant. She said that with the left over parking spots being about 25 the other businesses should have no problem with parking.

George of North Elm Street said the Thursday evening event has been a success and always looked forward to it since COVID hit.

Steven of Fair Street is the husband to Linda who owns Body & Soul Day Spa. He talked about how the pandemic hit hard for a lot of people. He wants to find a fair and equitable agreement to the parking spaces being blocked off. He thinks all of the businesses should get together and talk about this.

Bob Baulow talks about who what is happening in uptown is a safe environment for his young kids. He thinks it is a great event and is what makes Wallingford special.

Jack McGuire of North Main Street talked about his tenants and how he felt about the Thursday night event. He says he doesn't want to have to look for a parking spot to go shop at a store if he cannot park in front of that store.

Betsy Bates talked about all of the businesses that benefit from the foot traffic during the summer and fall season. The event on Thursday night is so much bigger than just Geatano's.

Kevin Geatano of South Main Street says the event in uptown is a good thing for the town. He says there should be away to do this every year without having to charge for parking spots.

Linda Bently owner of Body & Soul Day Spa, North Main Street says that there should be a way to have the Thursday night event by blocking off the whole parking lot so everyone can enjoy it.

Rick Vitaely of North Whittelsey Avenue says he love the Town of Wallingford. He says the residents are fortunate to have a down town area because some towns do not have one. Wants to keep the focus of how precious this event is.

Tammy Pasdeck of Meridan ran down to talk about how her and her friends love the Thursday night event.

Sheila, an employee of Body & Soul Day Spa talked about how sometimes they leave at 5 and no one is in the parking lot. She talked about how this event should continue.

Karen read a couple of comments that she received from people.

Raylin Cash said why can't the businesses have designated spots to alleviate the issue of parking.

John Laturno of Legune Court has been operating a business for 24 years. Thinks Wallingford is a great town. The pandemic changed everything and businesses had to adapt. He says outside dining works well.

Chairman Marrone says the event happening seems great and the businesses benefit and

everyone loves it. If the businesses agree with something he has no problem supporting it. He has a problem with telling people meaning the businesses how to handle this.

MOTION WAS MADE to approve a 10 minutes break.
MADE BY: FISHBAIN
SECONDED BY: CARMODY
ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR

Councilor Laffin talked about the meetings that were held this year trying to decide what to do with the event and parking spots for outdoor dining. He stated that what happens on Thursday nights has nothing to do with outdoor dining. He said it was the different restaurants who started this. The concern most people talked about was the Thursday night event and not having parking lot dining.

Mayor Cervoni stated he is not opposed to having a police car blocking of the parking spots to create this parking lot dining he would just need to have a discussion with the Police Department.

Councilor Tatta made a motion;

**MOTION WAS MADE to approve outdoor dining in the same
Square footage or less as the 2023 season in Simpson
Court for the 2024 season.**
MADE BY: TATTA
SECONDED BY: CARMODY

Councilor Testa discussed the thought process of just coming up with an idea for this item just to come up with an idea. He wants to come up with an alternative so that Simpson Court isn't shut down like it is now.

Councilor Laffin tried to amend the motion with no success.

John Ross, DJ asked the council why doesn't the town pay him like they pay for the bands in town during events.

John Laturno of Legunge Court questioned the motion that was made. He says it is more than just the music on Thursday nights.

Sheila from Body & Soul Day Spa gave pictures to the council showing that there is no need to close the parking lot for outdoor dining .

Bill Comerford of Broadview Drive agrees with what Councilor Laffin said previously. He also agrees with what Mr. McGuire said about his tenants. He said people come to Uptown for the community aspect and not just for the food. He talked about the other restaurnats across the street losing out if they are not able to make money off of the parking spots.

Councilor Fishbein talked about how we got here. The council only voted on outdoor dining last year. Previous to that it was an Executive Order that put outdoor dining into effect. He wanted to know if the motion passes are there dates as to when it starts and ends. He talked about the Insurance paperwork the council received from John Ross. He discussed the pictures that the council was given.

Councilor Testa he agrees that this should be brought to the Ordinance Committee. He wanted to know if the motion can be amended. He talked about possible scenarios.

Councilor Laffin said he is willing to look into the Thursday night event because it is something that everyone looks forward to.

ROLL CALL

ALLINSON: absent

CARMODY: AYE

FISHBEIN: NAY

LAFFIN: NAY

REGAN: NAY

REYNOLDS: AYE

TATTA: AYE

TESTA: AYE

MARRONE: NAY

4- AYE

4- NAY

MOTION: FAILED

14. Discussion and possible action regarding Fire Department Review – Chairman

Sam Wilson Acting Fire Chief and Mike Shaw Deputy Fire Chief were there to present.

Chairman Marrone stated he was the one who put this item on the agenda. He stated with having lost two fire chiefs he thought it was important to take about. While looking for a new chief he thought this study was important to do. He wants to address some of the issues and complaints that he has been hearing about. He is in favor of the study.

Councilor Testa talked about the study done relating to changes made to the Fire Department since 2019. He talked about changes in the administration. He spoke about hearing about problems within the department. He thinks now is not a good time to do the study seeing how the town has to hire a new chief.

Councilor Laffin he agrees with Chairman Marrone. The study can be helpful to the department in the long run. He thinks the study can be beneficial to running the department better in the future.

Councilor Fishbein he thinks this report could be of some assistance to the new chief coming into the department. He talked about the complaints he hears about the fire department.

Councilor Reynolds stated he had no problem with the study. He asked if it was a study from top to bottom including the buildings and such. H thinks the study should include all aspects.

Councilor Regan stated that the study should look at things like peer assessments. The communication can be a problem.

Councilor Tatta wanted the public to know that the service the fire department provides is not in question here.

Acting Fire Chief Sam Wilson said he provided the council with statistical data. He mentioned that the study data will likely come from the people in the fire department.

ROLL CALL

ALLINSON: absent

CARMODY: AYE

FISHBEIN: AYE

LAFFIN: AYE

REGAN: AYE

REYNOLDS: AYE

TATTA: AYE

TESTA: AYE

MARRONE: AYE

8- AYE

0- NAY

MOTION: PASSED

15. Discussion and possible action regarding Council Budget Process – Chairman: withdrawn

16. Discussion and possible action regarding Fair Rent Commission Interview Process -
Chairman

Chairman Marrone discussed his thoughts on how he would like to conduct the interviews.

Councilor Fishbein he thinks that having the interviews in executive session might be a problem for the public.

Chairman Marrone explained why he thought having the interviews in executive session would be a good idea.

Councilor Fishbein talked about his ideas for these interviews.

The meeting adjourned at 10:14 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristen Panzo
Town Clerk

Meeting digitally recorded

Joseph A. Marrone III, Chairman Date

Kristen Panzo, Town Clerk Date

In accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act- Individuals in need of auxiliary aids for effective communication in programs and services of the Town of Wallingford are invited to make their needs and preferences known to the ADA Compliance Coordinator at 203-294-2070 five days prior to meeting date.