

TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT
SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

HELD REMOTELY
at GoToMeeting.com

TUESDAY
April 20, 2021
6:30 P.M.
FY 2021-2022 BUDGET

RECORD OF VOTES & MINUTES

The Special Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, April 20, 2021 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 Thomas Laffin, Joseph A. Marrone, III, Gina Morgenstein, Christopher K. Shortell, Christina Tatta, Jason Zandri and Chairman Vincent Cervoni. Councilors Fishbein and Testa were absent. Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr., and Comptroller James Bowes were also present (BY TELECONFERENCE).

1. Moment of Silence
2. Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call
3. **LIBRARY**

In Attendance Jane Fisher, Wallingford Public Library

Ms. Fisher went over some prepared comments. She thanked the Council for their support over the past year and she acknowledged the Board of Managers. She spoke about the pandemic and the difficult decision to lay off part-time workers. She stated they opened to the public last July and that virtual programs have been a big hit. They have decided to move forward with in-person outdoor summer programs. She indicated it's been challenging but they have done an excellent job managing this.

There were no questions

EDC

*In Attendance: Joe Mirra, Chairman, EDC
Tim Ryan, Economic Development Specialist
Mark Gingras, Vice Chair, EDC*

Mr. Mirra introduced Mr. Ryan and Mr. Gingras.

Mr. Gingras indicated the marketing budget is the bigger part of the budget. He said they are promoting the town by going to Quinnipiac University and explained they secured seven students

and a professor who helped them set up a marketing program for the town. He indicated he has it on the calendar to come before the Council on May 25th to make a more formal presentation.

Councilor Tatta asked for an explanation of the \$49,744 for the Consulting Engineer.

Mr. Ryan explained outside of the operating budget there is a separate cap project number that is money that we worked in conjunction with the Engineering Department. It has to do with unlocking potential property behind the Hilton Garden on 68. He went on to explain we have money earmarked that has no impact on the budget at this point because it was budgeted several years back and it is in advance right now.

Councilor Morgenstein asked if we are talking about billboards that we are not moving forward with. Mr. Gingras stated they have several billboards and they don't rent the boards. He went on to state they have it within the budget to do maintenance and change messaging.

Councilor Morgenstein asked if the money being held onto for Consulting Engineer is moveable or does it stay with EDC. Mr. Bowes, Comptroller, explained that money was budgeted in a prior year so it cannot be used for any other purpose.

Councilor Shortell stated in the cover letter to the Budget there is a reference to funds from the American Rescue Plan. He asked Mr. Ryan if that is something he started. Mr. Ryan indicated he and the Mayor have met. He went on to state the money is not here yet and will be distributed over a two year period. He then read from the document. Mr. Ryan said nothing has been determined yet and noted they will be prepared when the time comes.

Ed Bradley, 2 Hampton Trail, inquired with the Mayor about the 3rd paragraph of his April 1st Budget memo. He said the Mayor references "we" have requested the EDC. He is curious who "we" is. The Mayor responded Administrative offices of the town of Wallingford.

Mr. Bradley asked if Don Roe's position had been filled. He asked if he would have been handling this. The Mayor stated Mr. Ryan and the EDC will be overseeing this. He noted we have a good team of people and we are awaiting details and a timeline. We are implementing them as efficiently as we can. The Mayor went onto say we have not filled the position Mr. Roe had.

Mr. Bradley spoke about the duties of the EDC and noted that is not the correct agency to head this process. He then brought up salaries and wages.

Mr. Ryan explained compensation for himself and the part-time position were approved in last year's budget and it has been adjusted for a pay increase.

Councilor Morgenstein stated money cannot be used for a full-time position. She feels investing in our future is what these monies are meant to do.

VETERANS

There were no questions.

REGISTRAR OF VOTERS

*In Attendance: Joan Parisi, Registrar
Bob Avery, Registrar*

There were no questions.

WCI

In Attendance: Kathleen Lilley, Executive Director

Ms. Lilley noted they did fairly well throughout this. They had to cancel a number of their events and they have created new events. She stated they worked with Public Celebrations and Parks and Recreation and they will do another Restaurant Week.

Councilor Zandri asked why we didn't ask for budgeting for Celebrate Wallingford. Ms. Lilley said the vote was done by the Board On May 2nd and they quickly had to change the budget being presented to the Mayor.

Chairman Cervoni clarified the vote was done by the Board on March 2nd not May 2nd.

Ms. Lilley outlined some of the things they are going to do.

Councilor Zandri asked if they got new planters. Ms. Lilley said yes and indicated they will be done after the frost.

Councilor Tatta noted there was \$4,000 more budgeted than the previous year. She asked if that was from taking out Celebrate Wallingford or did the funds get moved into other special events. Ms. Lilley explained Celebrate Wallingford has never officially been in the budget and stated it's pretty much a wash. She said they are bringing in enough revenue from fees from various vendors and sponsorships to be able to offset the expenses.

Councilor Shortell agrees with Councilor Zandri. He wishes we could have these events. He complimented Ms. Lilley and stated you and the Board made a hard but correct decision.

Mr. Comerford asked if they are affiliated with Main Street USA. Ms. Lilley said yes, we are a member of Main Street USA. Mr. Comerford asked Ms. Lilley what she is doing to subscribe to their philosophy. Ms. Lilley said we are still working with the same philosophy that Main Street USA does and their mission is the same mission we have as an organization. She stated she is working 50 hours a week to put these programs together. They are providing classes and helping with marketing.

Mr. Comerford asked Ms. Lilley what percent of her budget is devoted toward the USA Main Street project. Ms. Lilley responded 100% percent and indicated everything they do works for those same things that Main Street USA does.

WCI CAPITAL/FACAADE

There were no questions.

SENIOR CENTER

In Attendance: Bill Viola, Executive Director

Mr. Viola said things are looking up and he is very grateful to have the support of the town and the Health Department. He noted 95% of the 65 - 74 and 93% of the 75+ population have been vaccinated. He stated they shut down last year and at the end of May and they laid-off part-timers and transportation staff. He stated although they had reduced revenue, they've had substantially reduced expenses which is reflected in their budget.

HISTORIC PROGRAM MATCH

In Attendance: Gerald Farrell, Jr.

There were no questions.

CENTER STREET CEMETERY

In Attendance: Bob Gross, Center Street Cemetery

Mr. Gross thanked the Boards and the volunteers. He stated we appreciate the money from the town but without the additional help the cemetery would not run as good as it does.

Councilor Shortell had a general question about last year's budget versus this years' budget. He would like to know the impact of being cut by \$4,000 has had and what is driving the request of \$90,000.

Mr. Gross explained last year they asked for \$88,000 from the Mayor but in March the Mayor let the Association know he would put his back to previous years because of the unknowns of COVID. He indicated they ran at a loss. They still have to maintain the 10 acres, monuments and grounds and costs of insurance and utilities were still there. He noted materials are going way up. He went on to say for the amount of work done they are underfunded and they have done additional things such as put in cameras and are looking to add more.

Mr. Comerford, 5 Broadview Drive, asked Mr. Beaumont what his role is of Center Street Cemetery. Mr. Beaumont stated Vice President under Finance and anything else that needs to be done.

Mr. Comerford asked if memberships or donations are tax deductible. Mr. Beaumont said yes, they should be. He then asked if that falls under income and Mr. Beaumont answered yes.

Mr. Comerford inquired about the line item under depreciations –under total expenses for \$3,700. Mr. Beaumont said like any other business we depreciate our equipment depending on the nature of the equipment.

Mr. Comerford stated in the Budget it only states depreciation and he notes in the past they have been depreciating a possession which is the cemetery gates. He asked are they still depreciating that and is that effective on this budget. Mr. Gross answered no.

Mr. Comerford asked if Center Street Cemetery is utilizing both buildings and does the insurance and utilities cover both buildings. Mr. Beaumont answered yes we utilize both buildings but indicated he will have to look at the policy as to insurance.

There was discussion between Mr. Comerford, Mr. Beaumont and Mr. Gross.

Ms. Huizenga asked if Center Street Cemetery is budgeting for a website. Mr. Gross stated the town does not pay for the website. He said the server went down and hopefully they will get that up and running.

Ms. Huizenga then asked about the ongoing lawsuit and if tax payer dollars are being used for these fees. Mr. Gross explained they had to absorb that money. It's over \$15,000 over a three year period that Mr. Comerford was the other party to.

Ms. Huizenga noted to Mr. Gross that he references to a lot of volunteers but she does not see this activity.

Ms. Huizenga asked if there is money in the budget for training of any kind. Mr. Gross answered yes.

PUBLIC CELEBRATIONS

*In Attendance: Joan Parisi, Treasurer
Roz Gallagher, Chairman*

Ms. Gallagher stated we cancelled most events due to COVID. The budget will allow us to either go back to our traditional style of events or if need be continue with our revised format.

There were no questions.

Ms. Lilley stated it was fabulous to partner with Public Celebrations.

COLUMBUS HOUSE

There were no questions.

SCOW

*In Attendance: Adriana Rodriguez, Executive Director
Jeffrey Necio, Board Chairman*

Ms. Rodriguez thanked everyone for their continued support and she thanked the Health Department.

There were no questions.


WALLINGFORD 2021

Christine Mansfield stated we are rescheduled for June 20, 2022. She thanked all the volunteers, the Council and the town. She stated they do not have any incremental requests for funding as they did last year.

There were no questions.

Chairman Cervoni adjourned the meeting.

Lisa Moss
Council Staff
Meeting digitally recorded



Vincent Cervoni, Chairman

26 April 2021

Date



Deborah McKiernan, Town Clerk

5.26.2021

Date

RECEIVED FOR RECORD 4-26-21
AT 3:30 AND RECEIVED BY
Deborah McKiernan TOWN CLERK