

**TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT  
SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
Robert F. Parisi Council Chambers  
TUESDAY  
FEBRUARY 21, 2023  
Immediately Following Special Ordinance Committee Meeting  
RECORD OF VOTES AND MINUTES**

The Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, February 21, 2023, was called to order at 8:55 p.m. There was a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance was said. Councilors in attendance were, Samuel Carmody, Thomas Laffin, Joseph A. Marrone, III, Christina Tatta, Vincent F. Testa, Jason Zandri, and Chairman Vincent Cervoni.

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Discussion and possible action on a plan for the Appropriation of ARPA funds in municipal projects and/or capital expenditures – Councilor Testa

Councilor Testa stated that he'd like to see us prioritize what to do with the money. He asked if we are still on board with assigning \$5 million to the pool. If so there is nothing left to spend. Do we want to spend half the money on a multitude of projects or put it all into the pool? He stated that he wants the pool done. He asked if there is a better chance of completion with this money or if it is still feasible as a project that we bond. He doesn't want to make any decisions on ARPA that torpedo the pool. He stated that his preference is to bond the pool. There are so many things we can do with the ARPA money. He asked what the Council wants to do with the pool. Secondly, he stated that he is worried about what we are going to see in the budget.

Councilor Laffin stated that he prefers to bond the pool as it is cleaner and easier. Regarding the Mayor's list, from the December 13 email, it is part of the capital list. It includes the police mobile command center, the roof of Town Hall, the roof of SCOW, the ambulance, the ladder truck, etc. These are things that can get done but are held up by the flow of money. The Government Fiber Optic Network is a big project. He stated that he would rather do some smaller things.

Councilor Zandri asked if we have the wherewithal to get a bond. The school renovations need a bond. We bonded for the Police Station. Do we need more debt at this point? He stated that he would rather see it all done. If the pool is bonded it is paid off over time using future dollars. He stated that he is good with taking this chunk of money and doing all of these one-off items in a year, but not losing sight of the pool. He added that the Council has been working well together and we need to continue to do so. With compromise, everyone walks away with something but not everything. He likes the idea of letting go of the \$5 million for the pool as long as it still gets done.

Councilor Marrone stated that economically this is the worst time to do these projects. If we expect the economy to stay strong we should do small projects. If we expect the economy to tank we should put the money toward the pool and bond the rest. He supports the pool and wants to get it done. Many of the small projects require town employees. If we bid them out we get more resources.

Councilor Tatta referred to a list that was compiled through the ARPA process. At the bottom, the highlighted ones were handled through the committee. She stated that she is not necessarily convinced of the need to keep the \$5 million for the pool. She noted that Council voted to go out to bid for the pool

and get costs for renovation. That didn't happen. She suggested we ask the Mayor if it will happen and then decide how to handle it. She doesn't want the money just sitting there. She suggested adding this to the next Council agenda. If we are going to do little projects, we should have a special meeting. She suggested that each councilor submit one or two top projects. This should give us a list of 10 to 18 items. This will help us prioritize. Looking at the ARPA list, some items are relatively inexpensive and have a lot of bang for the buck like online bill pay and the splash pad.

Councilor Carmody stated that he wants to see the pool done and prefers bonding it. He agreed that revisiting the bidding for the pool will help with direction. He stated that he wants to do the projects on both lists.

Councilor Laffin stated that he recalls that the Mayor wanted to wait on the bidding until after the ARPA was done. So he may be ready to move on now.

Councilor Testa stated that he recalls the Mayor agreed that once the ARPA applications for businesses and non-profits were approved he would put the project out to bid. He would like to find out why that has not happened. He also noted that we are missing out on federal grant money for infrastructure projects. There is currently an infrastructure bill in congress and we just have to ask for it. He added that we need to let people know we are talking about getting these projects done. He agreed that the Council has been working well together for the last few years. We respect each other's viewpoints. He suggested that categorizing the items in the lists will help.

Chairman Cervoni agreed to send a letter to the Mayor asking about the bidding on the pool and reference the vote to renovate what is currently there.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN WAS MADE AT 9:30 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl-Ann Tubby  
Recording Secretary

RECEIVED FOR RECORD 2/27/2023  
AT 9:00 AND RECEIVED BY  
Deborah McKernan TOWN CLERK