



**TOWN COUNCIL
VIRTUAL MEETING
JUNE 15, 2020
Regular Town Council Meeting**

APPROVED MINUTES

1) CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trinks called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m.

Present: Mayor Donald Trinks, Deputy Mayor Joe McAuliffe, Councilor Nuchette Black-Burke, Councilor Lisa Rampulla Bress, Councilor James Dobler, Councilor James Govoni, Councilor Donald Jepsen, Councilor Lenworth Walker, and Councilor Kenneth Wilkos

2) PRAYER OR REFLECTION

Councilor Wilkos led the group in prayer/reflection.

3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Wilkos led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4) PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS - None

5) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

John Dunn, 15 Strawberry, would like to refer to the Amazon project as the “Amazon Monster” because of the size of the proposed structure and the affects it will have on the community. He predicts that there will be regular traffic issues due to the various nearby on and off ramps from Interstate 91. There will be heavy traffic causing traffic jams around the schools and shopping areas near River Street. Mr. Dunn believes the project is too large for the immediate area even though it has been zoned industrial for the available plot of land.

Leroy Smith, 531 Edgewood, will address the Amazon issue later, but would like to focus on his support towards the declaring of racism as a public health crisis. Mr. Smith’s daughter experienced discrimination and was given different secondary opportunities as well as various extracurricular activities, in comparison to her white peers, while attending Windsor public schools. This will have an effect on her and her friends’ future. Mr. Smith believes that Windsor Public Schools is a catalyst for the disparities among people of color. He would like this to be addressed by the town and for the town to adopt an ordinance. He then moved on expressing his concerns about the Amazon project. Mr. Smith stated that the town should be focusing on vibrant, livable community additions instead of a wealthy global company.

Eric Weiner, 76 Palisado Avenue, referred to the Amazon project in terms of the abatement. He stated it would be the most expedient thing to do—to vote yes on the town’s proposal for the tax abatement. However, at some point, municipalities need to step in and say enough is enough with catering to large companies, especially with such a large tax break. Mr. Weiner would like to humbly request the Council consider not giving Amazon the tax abatement.

Susan Miller, 10 Ethan Drive, also agreed with Mr. Weiner that Amazon should not get a tax abatement, because with or without it, Amazon will come to Windsor. Ms. Miller was very happy to see the virtual net metering on the agenda because she believes that moving toward 100% renewable energy is the right move for the town. Ms. Miller would also like to express her support for the resolution to declare racism as a public health crisis.

Judge Kevin Washington, Chair of the Human Relations Commission, would like to extend his appreciation for the participation in last weekend’s event on June 7th to all of the Town of Windsor Town Council members and employees, with a special thanks to Mayor Donald Trinks. It was one of the largest events the Human Relations Commission has hosted. He is trying to develop programming and support of the issue at hand for racial discrimination and diversity. The resolution is heavily supported by the Human Relations Commission. Judge Washington also recognized the importance of celebrating and supporting the LGBTQ community.

Kay McAuliffe, 18 Kellogg Street, is not in support of the tax break for Amazon, but is in support for the racism resolution to declare racism as a public health crisis. Ms. McAuliffe is happy to see that Windsor is following in other town’s footsteps to move toward a better resolution to support diversity and improving the community’s rights. She would like to see the defunding and demilitarizing of police. Windsor police paid a significant amount of money toward guns and vehicles, when it could have been redirected toward social services and public health measures, and could even be put toward schools.

Lakisha Hyatt, 104 Benjamin Court, addressed the topic of declaring racism as a public health crisis and the everyday disparities and inequality that severely affects black and brown individuals in Windsor. She stated that this is a public crisis because racism does in fact infect the lives and livelihoods of the black and brown residents in Windsor. Ms. Hyatt deeply supports the resolution of declaring racism as a public health crisis. She asks that there be a team of accountability, since there is an opportunity to talk about this with the police and discussing changes in handling situations such as eliminating holds and reviewing mental health training. This will create a systemic change. Ms. Hyatt applauds Councilor Black-Burke for eloquently speaking on this issue.

Ashanti Osbourne Martin, 85 Pierce Boulevard, expressed her intent to speak in favor of the Town of Windsor declaring racism as a public health crisis because this declaration is not just to be acknowledged, but is an opportunity to put forth solutions. This is something that needs to be managed, due to the evidence of racial bias in the Windsor public schools and how various town resources such as regular maintenance, infrastructure improvements, and park improvements are allocated fairly. Ms. Martin also expressed her concern for the health care provided to the black community, especially during the pandemic, who are dying at a much higher rate than their

white counterparts. It also goes beyond the coronavirus, which includes police violence. Ms. Martin's hope is that this resolution will help Windsor not only declare racism as a health crisis, but also reallocate resources and provide more training opportunities and discussion to police officers and residents of the town in order to combat this issue.

Melissa Strother, 60 Nod Road, would like to speak in favor for declaring racism as a public health crisis. This will offer a clear path to intentionally acknowledge disparities and inequalities, which is the first step. Ms. Strother expressed that she does not want something to happen in the Town of Windsor like the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery. It is important to protect the liberties and rights of the black and brown community. Ms. Miller would like to see that not only police but also the residents be educated about racism and how it impacts the black and brown communities that are unacknowledged and the harm that it causes. Ms. Strother asked that racism be thought of as a public health crisis in order to prevent injustices in the future and that everyone survives the way that they should.

6) COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilor Dobler addressed the two major topics for the evening with the first being the tax abatement for Amazon. Councilor Dobler expressed that there was never a chance that the 7 year 100% abatement was going to be agreed to. He is grateful that there have been many continued negotiations, leaving neither side happy with the agreement and that's when you know it is a fair agreement. Councilor Dobler's second topic discussed was the vote to declare racism as a public health crisis. This vote will allow to officially start the conversation for change. Councilor Dobler added a quick comment that baseball and softball little leagues have returned.

Councilor Walker would like to remind everyone to stay safe and support small local businesses. Secondly, after listening intently to the speakers, he suggested that we can look at the glass as half full or half empty referring to racism in the community. He would like to be optimistic with the glass being half full. The community should celebrate the diversity of Windsor. We have implemented so many programs in Windsor that are the envy of other towns. There is more to be done involving racism, but let us celebrate the successes of Windsor and improve on those. Councilor Walker supports the resolution, but also stated that the Windsor Police Department should be celebrated, not defunded, after the many positive interactions between the police men and women and the residents in town. Councilor Walker would like to allow the federal government and state government to handle the greater health disparities while we as residents in the Town of Windsor focus on more of the local issues, such as noise complaints or neighborly troubles. Windsor does not have these larger issues and that should be celebrated.

Councilor Govoni had no further comments.

Councilor Black-Burke would like to thank all of the speakers during the public comment at the beginning of the meeting. They spoke with honesty about their feelings on the racism crisis. Councilor Black-Burke would also like to thank the Human Relations Commission and educators, and students for what they had to say on the green during the event. Councilor Black-Burke

would like to call to everyone's attention the successful COVID 19 testing operation at the Windsor shopping center. Thank you to everyone who was a part of that and making it a success.

Councilor Wilkos had no further comments.

Councilor Rampulla Bress expressed how grateful she is to the community for addressing the issues they want resolved. The community is what the Council is here for and when the community speaks, it is important to listen. Councilor Rampulla Bress looks forward to working with Councilor Black-Burke and the rest of the councilors on approving this ordinance, because the proclamation is extremely important. It is clear that the community wants this as well. Councilor Rampulla Bress would also like to wish everyone a happy Pride Month.

Councilor Jepsen thanked the Human Relations Commission for the opportunity to speak at the event as well as his fellow Council members who also spoke. It was a very wonderful day. Councilor Jepsen also extended a special congratulations to all of the Windsor graduates.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe thanked the Human Relations Commission for putting together the event two Sunday's ago, and for fellow Council members who spoke at the event. Deputy Mayor McAuliffe especially focused on Councilor Black-Burke's moving speech about being a mother and worrying about her children and other mothers, their sons, and their losses. Deputy Mayor McAuliffe extended a thank you to Councilor Black-Burke for her contribution to the successful event.

Mayor Trinks thanked the Human Relations Commission for coordinating the event. It truly showed the diversity of the town and the town's ability to come together. Mayor Trinks acknowledged the impressive attendance from the young adults who contributed to the event. Mayor Trinks stated that although he may not be able to attend the graduation, he would like to congratulate the Windsor graduates.

7) REPORT OF APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSION

Mayor Trinks stated that the Public Building Commission, Economic Development Commission, and Housing Code Board of Appeals have submitted a written report to the Council, and each Councilor has received a copy.

- a) Public Building Commission
- b) Economic Development Commission
- c) Housing Code Board of Appeals

8) TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Concerts on the Green

First Town Downtown is sorry to announce that they will not be hosting concerts on the green during the summer of 2020 due to the many concerns of volunteers, musicians, sponsors and

not knowing what the state guidelines will be later this summer about large groups. For more information call 860-688-5715.

Farmer's Market to Begin July 2

First Town Downtown is very excited to be moving forward with the Farmers' Market with new guidelines to keep everyone safe. It will run from **July 2 through October 15** on Thursdays from **3:30 - 6:30 pm** at 240 Broad Street in Windsor Center. This well-attended local marketplace in Windsor Center includes locally grown fruits, vegetables, baked goods, herbs, eggs, cheese, skincare products, candles and more. For more information call 860-688-5715.

Windsor Libraries

The Main and Wilson Branch Libraries are scheduled to re-open to the public on June 22. All visitors and staff will be required to wear a face covering and maintain social distancing of six feet. If unable to wear a face cover, curbside pick-up will still be available for all patrons.

Public computers can be used for one hour per day per person with a library card. The fax machine and photocopier will be available for independent use with a credit/debit card or exact change. Patrons will be encouraged to wipe down keyboards before using them. Disinfecting towels and hand sanitizer will be provided.

Programs and the virtual collection will continue to be offered online at www.windsorlibrary.com.

Summer 2020 hours at the main library will be Monday -Thursday 10-7, Friday and Saturday 10-5. Wilson Branch hours will be Monday 10-7:30, Tuesday-Friday 10-5:30 and Saturday 10-3.

Summer Camps

Recreation summer camps and Northwest Park educational camps begin on Monday, June 29, in a modified fashion to comply with orders by the state. Camp programs will be offered at various locations, including LP Wilson, 330 Windsor Ave., and Clover Street School. Registration is on-going, and scholarships are available. For more information, call 860-285-1990 or go to <https://townofwindsorct.com/recreation/camps-pools-parks/>

Swim lessons & pools

Goslee Pool and Welch Pool will be open as of July 1. By state orders, the number of patrons permitted in the pool area will be limited to the number that can safely fit on the pool deck area while practicing social distancing. Senior swim, open swim, and lap swim will be offered at various times throughout the day. To avoid potentially long lines, we are encouraging individuals to reserve swim times online at www.townofwindsorct.com/recreation.

In addition, Recreation is offering a scaled-down version of swim lessons. Lessons will be for levels Parent-Tot, Water Adjustment with a Parent/Guardian, Level 4, and 5. For more information, call the Recreation Department at 860-285-1990 or go to <https://townofwindsorct.com/recreation/camps-pools-parks/>

COVID Financial Recap

We are projecting to incur approximately \$195,000 in various expenses related to addressing COVID-19. These costs are being covered by the FY 20 General Fund. Included in this estimate is approximately \$68,000 in unemployment expenses due to furloughing or reducing hours of 69 part-time employees and reducing hours of 6 full-time positions.

We will be pursuing partial reimbursement for eligible expenses through federal and state assistance.

In terms of revenue, our overall General Fund revenues have not been negatively impacted over the past few months. Two of our Enterprise Funds and several special revenue accounts have been impacted in terms of revenue. Some of the loss in revenue has been mitigated by lower program expenses.

Through the end of the current budget year, the two enterprise funds are projected to have a new loss totaling \$215,000, with the Discovery Center accounting for \$187,000 of the loss.

Combined Recreation, Senior Center and Northwest Park user fee accounts are projected to experience a new loss of approximately \$60,000 for FY 20.

Looking ahead to FY 21, the two enterprise funds, as well as summer recreation programs, are likely to see less revenues as programs are being modified and scaled back to meet State safety guidelines. Unfortunately, program expenses will not be noticeably less due to staffing ratios, additional materials and supply costs.

Credit Rating Reaffirmed and Bond Sale Results

Standard and Poor's (S & P) has reaffirmed the Town's AAA credit rating for the 2020 bond and note issue. Our rating was affirmed after S&P reviewed and analyzed various aspects of the local and regional economy, recent economic development activity, management practices, fiscal and debt management practices, budgetary performance, retirement plan stewardship and our other post-employment benefits program.

The Credit Profile report documents had a number of positives put forth by S & P, such as our "strong economy, strong management practices and strong budgetary flexibility".

The bond and note sale took place on Thursday, June 12th and the results were favorable. The town received nine bids on the bond sale and Janney Montgomery Scott LLC was the low bidder at 1.8% TIC. The issue consisted of \$15,570,000 general obligation bonds with a 20 year term and interest rates ranging from 5.0% down to 2.0% (average rate or "coupon" 3.17%). The issue came with a cash premium of approx. \$1.1 million.

The town received 5 bids on the bond anticipation note. This issue consisted of a one year note in the amount of \$12,500,000 with a 2% interest rate and premium in the amount of \$188,000.

The proceeds from the bond and note sale will be used to finance projects in the FY 20 capital improvement project, as well as provide funds for the continuing construction of the public safety facilities at 110 Addison Road and 300 Bloomfield Avenue. We will close on the bond and note sale and receive proceeds on Thursday, June 25th.

9) REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Town Improvements Committee – Councilor Dobler reported that the Town Improvements Committee will be meeting next week.

Special Projects Committee – Councilor Dobler – nothing to report.

Health & Safety Committee – Councilor Black-Burke stated a date has not been solidified for the next Health & Safety Committee meeting, but it will be determined in the very near future. Especially pending the results of the approval of the resolution.

Personnel Committee – Councilor Rampulla Bress said the committee will be meeting on June 24th, and will be interviewing 17 candidates for the Farmington River and Salmon Brook Wild and Scenic Coordinating Committee. There are only two spots available, but the committee is thrilled at the response from all of the qualified applicants. There will be a second meeting the following month set to interview for the Task Force and applications are due June 22nd. Councilor Bress would also like all applicants to consider putting a second choice when interviewing, because there may be other committees that interest them and have open slots available.

Finance Committee – Deputy Mayor McAuliffe stated that the Finance Committee met a week ago and there was very good public comment, particularly relating to the Amazon project. All items mentioned will be discussed later in the meeting.

10) ORDINANCES - None

11) UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a) Consider Fixed Assessment Agreement and Building Permit Fee Reduction for Amazon

RESOLVED by Councilor Dobler, seconded by Councilor Jepsen that the Town Manager is authorized and directed to execute on behalf of the Town of Windsor a fixed assessment agreement between the Town of Windsor and Amazon.com Services, LLC which is generally consistent with the attached draft form of agreement and RESOLVED that the Town Manager is authorized and directed to execute on behalf of the Town of Windsor a building permit fee reduction agreement between the Town of Windsor and Amazon.com Services, LLC which is generally consistent with the attached draft form of agreement.

Town Manager Souza provided a brief overview about the adopted assessment abatement policy and incentives. The assessment abatement policy helps guide the Council toward final decisions.

One goal of the abatement policy is to increase or maintain the non-residential tax base. The Town Council has the sole discretion to approve the fixed assessments or abatements. The town also has a building permit fee reduction policy, which allows authorization of a reduced permit fee for certain types of industries, including large projects like the Amazon project. The Amazon project does qualify under the town's economic incentive policy as well as the town's building permit fee reduction. The company and staff have been discussing a possible abatement agreement and there will be a three year agreement with a declining abatement for real estate only. In lieu of a longer abatement period, it is suggested that a 50% reduction of the upfront building fee be considered. The terms have been concurred by Amazon and the proposed agreement is attached for both incentives. It includes the term of the abatement, investment schedules, and improvements to be made by no later than October 1, 2021. It also agrees that the Council has a right to extend the timeline if the Council finds it reasonable that the company has continued to pursue the project even though they have not met that time frame. Amazon states that the company will put forth good efforts to employ qualifying residents for full and part time positions and there has been added language to the agreement for the company to support Windsor based organizations and programs through a variety of means. The town's earnings are projected in this attached plan as well. Over a seven year period, the town has the possibility to receive over \$30 million in revenue to the town. Mr. Brad Griggs from Amazon is on the line to answer any further questions about the Amazon project.

Councilor Dobler commented on the abatement earlier and believes that the negotiations are fair on both sides. Councilor Dobler also questioned Town Manager Souza on how the abatement will work in order to clarify that it does not come out of the tax payers dollars. Town Manager Souza briefly explained that the abatement reduces the tax liability for real estate that the company has. Currently the parcel that is under consideration creates \$114,000 in revenue for the town. If the project is constructed under the terms of the agreement, the revenue from real estate taxes and personal property taxes will be greater so that it reduces the tax liability for the company. Councilor Dobler responded and confirmed that his questions were answered, and reiterated that Amazon is not paying as much as they would without an abatement, but there is also no money coming out of the town because of the agreement.

Councilor Walker addressed the size of the project being a concern, but the success of the company will contribute to the capitalist society. Councilor Walker is also concerned that the wages are lower than they should be for future Amazon employees.

Councilor Rampulla Bress stated she understands the financial impact that Amazon will have on the community. It is clear that the amount of money received each year will have a significant impact on the community along with what the Council can do for the town. Councilor Rampulla Bress' only reservation is about the hesitancy of Amazon to commit prior to this agreement to some items that are important to the community and to her as a Councilor. Her concern is not about the financial impact, but it is important in Windsor that there is other criteria for judging what kind of businesses are wanted in the town. We pride ourselves for the relationships built between small and large businesses here in the community and what they mean to the residents. Councilor Rampulla Bress would like to know what was specifically told to Windsor about the community connection since the last time she spoke with Mr. Griggs about this concern. Mr. Griggs stated

that there were 12,800 items shared. Councilor Bress would like to know what was specifically shared with the other Amazon warehouses and Windsor. If something is not articulated in the contract, sometimes it doesn't happen, but in good faith it is important for the Amazon Company to be a positive contributor to the community. Another concern is the wage. The Amazon wage is respectable for now in the year 2020, but will the wage be adjusted for the future opening when minimum wage requirements may be higher in the years 2021 or 2022. Councilor Rampulla Bress would also like the solar panel plans to be explained, as she stated it is very disappointing that there was not a direct answer for such an important addition to their sustainable energy initiative.

Mr. Brad Griggs responded to Councilor Rampulla Bress that the items mentioned by Town Manager Souza earlier in the meeting have been discussed. In addition to the 12,800 items donated to the residents, there has also been hiring events provided for the residents and there are already over 250 residents employed at the Day Hill Road facility. Mr. Griggs answered Councilor Rampulla Bress' wage question when he stated those wages include twenty to thirty percent benefits bringing total wages above \$18 per hour. The wage is a company-wide mandate, but the entry level associate hourly wage is \$15.75 and that is without the benefits, overtime and bonuses. Mr. Griggs followed up on Councilor Rampulla Bress' question about solar. When stated from a sustainability standpoint, Amazon is in the process of developing dozens of facilities of this size that have hundreds of thousands of square footage. Their solar team will evaluate the building and will then add the panels based on the capabilities of the completed project. All buildings are designed to have the capability for solar but it is dependent on an evaluation. It is a significant capital investment to commit to, and Amazon will work for sustainable efforts as it is a priority for the town. Mr. Griggs stated that Amazon has the most solar paneled facilities in the country. Councilor Bress followed up with being encouraged by Mr. Grigg's answers. Councilor Bress is still not sure about if the \$15.75 wage is referring to the current year or to the future years, when the facility is planning to open. Mr. Griggs commented that Amazon is committed to the starting wage of \$15.75, but there was no reference to inflation in the coming years.

Councilor Wilkos wanted to thank the public for their support and concerns regarding the Amazon project. The community should know that Windsor has had their abatement policy for many years. It was enacted in 2004. Councilor Wilkos believes it does need to be revisited moving forward. Councilor Wilkos referred to Mr. Dunn's comment from earlier about the "Amazon monster" project. Councilor Wilkos stated while it does fit all of the building codes and land approvals, it is a rather large, but magnificent project for the Kennedy Road location. Councilor Wilkos explained that when you purchase personal property it can never be assumed that it will always look the way it does. He added that you will never know what your "new neighbor" will be, but times always change. It is irrelevant that Amazon is one of the wealthiest companies in the world. They should not be shamed in terms of the Town of Windsor's written policy in order to meet their financial needs and put money into the community. Councilor Wilkos then addressed the questions of fair wages when he stated that these are entry level jobs, which will provide a higher wage than the average minimum wage in Connecticut. Councilor Wilkos believes that the seven year abatement was not going to be approved to begin with. Now with the agreements in place, the only concern that remains is that it would be hard to repurpose a building of that size if Amazon were to leave that location. He is in agreement with the three year on average 50% abatement, which will benefit the community as a whole.

Councilor Black-Burke expressed that she is struggling with approving the project, because of the concerns that have been mentioned about the size of the facility, where it sits, and if Amazon decides to vacate in the future. Secondly, Councilor Black-Burke asked Town Manager Souza, what Amazon specifically will be contributing to the community. Town Manager Souza responded that the language as drafted is that Amazon is committing to implementing programs based on various needs of the town. The programs may be evolving and changing at the moment because Amazon does already have other programs within the company that have been created to be used in each location's communities across the country.

Councilor Black-Burke would like to know what the programs are in other places. She would also like to know if the 12,800 items are going to be contributed to the community in the future upon the agreement of the facility or to the existing facility on Day Hill Road. Town Manager Souza confirmed that the 12,800 items have come from the Day Hill Road location, but he does not recall the time frame, whether it was six months or twelve months.

Councilor Black-Burke would like to know the time frame and what the dollar amount equals to in regards to the 12,800 items donated. Mr. Griggs responded that those numbers are year to date as of the Finance Committee meeting on June 1st. Mr. Griggs also explained that there is not a specific dollar amount given that these are mostly Amazon goods, and the PPE requirement items were initially donated. Councilor Black-Burke then stated that she would like to know what these items included. Mr. Griggs responded accordingly by naming items donated, such as toys, household items, pet supplies, cleaning supplies, school supplies, other consumables, and PPEs. Councilor Black-Burke believes that it would be important for the community to know a dollar amount or what has been directly contributed.

Councilor Black-Burke would like more information regarding the college tuition reimbursement opportunities offered from Amazon. Mr. Griggs stated that college reimbursement is not directly part of the benefits package but Amazon offers a Career Choice program after one year of company employment. All employees are encouraged to pursue attending college, career advancement and licensing. Amazon will cover up to 95% of those efforts. This is not dependent upon being involved in advancing your career with Amazon, it can be in any field of the employee's choosing.

Councilor Black-Burke would like to know how tax deduction is affected if there is not a dollar amount to support the donations made. Mr. Griggs responded that Amazon donated approximately 70,000 additional items from the North Haven facility. He also stated that he will follow up with a dollar amount.

Councilor Govoni would like to bring attention to the residents. He said that by state law, the town is required to have a Plan of Conservation Development meeting every ten years, and when this time comes around, the public does not attend or speak up until a large development decides to come to town. The industrial lights have been indicators for over ten years that this land would be developed eventually. Councilor Govoni urged residents that when you have concerns about the development of the town, take the time to attend the Plan of Conservation Development

meetings. Councilor Govoni also wanted to call attention to the solar panel plan in relation to snow loads and snow removal in the winter. This could pose a problem and it is important to be considered beforehand. Councilor Govoni thanked the Finance Committee and Mr. Griggs for providing a clear picture of the Amazon project plans.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe would like to echo the concerns that other Councilors brought up in regards to the wages and whether or not inflation is considered when giving these wages, especially since the project will not open for some time. He is also in agreement to revise the town's abatement policy. Deputy Mayor McAuliffe would like to step back and look at the big picture of our current circumstances during the pandemic and loss of jobs. It is important to view this Amazon project as a positive because they will be providing 1,000 jobs with benefits. The reality is the pandemic could worsen and have more people out of work. Deputy Mayor McAuliffe believes that this will be a financial benefit for the Town of Windsor. It could allow for low tax increases or none, improve schools, promote small and local businesses, and other maintenance opportunities throughout the town. Deputy Mayor McAuliffe asked that residents do research and look at the Windsor Amazon project in comparison to other local Amazon projects in the northeast and their requested tax abatements. It is important to thank the Council and everyone involved for negotiating and getting a reasonable abatement put into place.

Councilor Jepsen would like to start with technical questions about the facility agreement. Councilor Jepsen confirmed that per the agreement Amazon will only be leasing the facility and would like to know how the owner will be involved in the agreement. Town Manager Souza responded that there will be a letter that is from the owner, Skadell Properties, with a clear delineation value that if this abatement passes, that the tenant is responsible for the taxes. Councilor Jepsen followed up with his second question regarding Amazon and the decision to add solar panels after the facility has been running for a year or two. He asked if there would be a new abatement rate due to the solar panel addition. Town Manager Souza confirmed that after the company gets their certificate of occupancy, there is no other value that gets abated or the building permit reduction does not apply after purchase. Councilor Jepsen said historically before abatements were put into place, there were other incentives Windsor would do for a developer and this project is half of that. But there will be a sense of relief while doing budgets this year with Amazon coming in, being a great source of revenue for the town. It will make future years for budgeting a lot easier as well. As long as the labor rate goes up and budget rates go up, the Amazon project will support that, and Councilor Jepsen is in support of the project.

Mayor Trinks would like to start by saying that Amazon kept its word in the past in reference to the Day Hill Road project. They held three job fairs to solicit Windsor residents for employment opportunities with Amazon. Mayor Trinks often looks at the profitable companies in Windsor that do not make contributions or donate to the community. A lot of big profitable companies are rarely heard from in regards to the community, so it is positive that Amazon has already made that commitment. It will be a lot of money coming into the Town of Windsor, but Mayor Trinks is concerned about the longer term of unemployment and businesses potentially closing due to the coronavirus and considering those losses of revenue. Mayor Trinks has concerns that the call centers and other offices in the building might need to reevaluate the size needed for office space due to working remotely during the pandemic if it continues. There are concerns about the grand

list and having more vacancies. The Amazon project is a guaranteed income stream, coming from a company that is making a significant investment in the town. Mayor Trinkis does not foresee Amazon wanting to leave this location within the next 10 years. The example has already been set at the Day Hill Road location. Mayor Trinkis is also not concerned about traffic issues increasing, as evidence shows from the Day Hill Road location. Amazon is a time focused company and will have the convenience of using Route 20. In addition to the office vacancy, he is also concerned about how the state funding will change and how it will be able to contribute to Windsor and the surrounding towns. Mayor Trinkis concluded that the project outweighs the negatives that have been brought up and looks forward to the benefits it will bring 29,000 people in the town.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

12) NEW BUSINESS

- a) Discussion of possible Virtual Net Metering arrangement for purchase of renewable energy

Town Manager Souza stated that Lodestar Energy, LLC and town staff have been discussing the program and the possibility of purchasing 3.6 million kWh per year of virtual net metering credits from a solar field located in Winchester, CT.

Currently Lodestar is awaiting approval from the Connecticut Siting Council. Once approved by the Siting Council, Lodestar would expect construction to start in early fall with a completion near the end of the year. Lodestar would be responsible for maintaining the solar units.

One hundred percent (100%) of the VNM credits are generated from a solar photovoltaic ground mounted system. If the town were to enter an agreement with Lodestar for 3.6 million kWh per year, the Town and Board of Education (BOE) combined would be utilizing solar energy for approximately 48% of its electricity use.

Under the proposed agreement with Lodestar, the Town would purchase 3.6 million kWh per year of virtual net metering credits over the term of 20 years.

The VNM Credit Rate would be a fixed 15% discount to the applicable Eversource rate based on the following and has been set by CT Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA):

- | | |
|------------|---|
| Year 1: | 100% of generation and 80% of transmission and distribution |
| Year 2: | 100% of generation and 60% of transmission and distribution |
| Year 3-20: | 100% of generation and 40% of transmission and distribution |

Projected savings as compared to the Eversource rate show a savings of approximately \$1.5 million over the course of 20 years (projections utilized a 2% increase annually on the Eversource Generation and T&D rate.) Projected savings could change depending on the volatility of the electricity rates.

Mr. Jaime Smith, from Lodestar Energy, gave a detailed presentation about how the Virtual Net Metering process works and what the community can expect from implementing this plan. There have been about 30 projects in the last six years. There are four solar array projects in the state of Connecticut which are located in Barkhamsted, Suffield, and East Windsor. Each town has received the benefit of the bargains that were expected. The benefit is that this project allows for more sustainable energy throughout the town while not affecting personal property because it does not physically touch the building or your property. It also does not cost the residents anything directly. Buying into this with credits will offset the community's electric bills. This current project would be built on Platt Hill Road in Winchester. The credits are worth approximately fifteen cents, and the town will be charged 85%, which is equivalent to thirteen cents per kilowatt hour. This will be a savings of about \$82,000 after the first year under contract. There has been a letter of intent signed and the next step would be to further the agreement with some negotiation. The project is expected to start construction in the late summer or early fall and will be finished by the end of this year.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe would like to know where the 3.5 kilowatt figure came from. Mr. Smith responded that the company is regulated to start with that kilowatt number based on the sunlight in Connecticut. Every project going forward will be a three megawatt project and take up about ten to twelve acres of land. Deputy Mayor McAuliffe followed up with another question about why the credits are limited by the state. Mr. Smith answered that the state has never wanted projects to become too large and that there are many benefits to having a multitude of power in smaller doses throughout various locations.

Councilor Rampulla Bress expressed her excitement about this project. She would like to know if there is a specific term or commitment for this kind of project. Mr. Smith responded that every other project is a 20 year commitment, and this will be as well. A contributing factor to that length of time is based on the warranty of the solar panels.

Councilor Govoni questioned if there is a designated field that is supplying energy to Windsor. Mr. Smith stated that the virtual power will be pushed into the grid in Winchester and Eversource will be able to use the power wherever it is needed. Windsor would apply for credits, which will then be used from the power bank where the energy is distributed from. Councilor Govoni stated his concern is that if there is a designated field and a catastrophic event occurred then what would happen to the credit agreement in place. Mr. Smith commented that if the credits do not show up on the electric bill then Lodestar would not get paid. For example if there were a Tornado in the Winchester location and destroyed the facility, the worst that could happen is there is not an opportunity for Windsor to use the credits.

Councilor Dobler directed his question to Town Manager Souza and Scott Colby, Assistant Town Manager, to confirm that Lodestar contacted the town and if this is the first firm that approached Windsor. Town Manager Souza answered that this is not the first firm to contact Windsor but during those previous times, staff was not in the position to do thorough research on this type of program. Councilor Dobler stated his concern for entering this agreement. He wants to make sure this is the best decision for the town, considering it is a twenty year agreement.

Councilor Wilkos is concerned that if the system is not producing energy, excluding catastrophic events, by looking back at last summer and fall there could be small amounts of solar energy collected. Councilor Wilkos would like to know at what point production levels are reevaluated if there are multiple months without credits. Mr. Smith responded that there will more than likely be variability with sunlight. What is important to note is that solar projects are not credited over what the community will use as far as dollar credits are concerned. The project has been sized around 85-90% of the total for the Town of Windsor so that it cannot produce more credits than would be used. Councilor Wilkos would like to know if the town is fixed into buying a certain amount of credits based on the buildings that would be offset by this energy in a 20 year term and if the credits are not used, then is it a loss. Mr. Smith stated that this is an opportunity to save money and the buildings using credits can be changed yearly in order to ensure the credit quota is being met.

Councilor Wilkos echoed Councilor Dobler's comments by saying that other communities are doing this and that the Council needs to look at other proposals in comparison. The fifteen percent discount is in question compared to other programs. Town Manager Souza referred a question to Mr. Smith asking if the fifteen percent is regulated under the Pyro Program. Mr. Smith stated that it is not part of that program, but it is a discount that has been given to all of the projects in the state.

The item was referred to the Finance Committee to be further considered.

b) Approve a resolution declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis

MOVED by Councilor Black-Burke, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to approve the attached resolution entitled "A Resolution Declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis."

WINDSOR TOWN COUNCIL

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, racism is a social system with multiple dimensions: individual racism that is interpersonal and/or internalized or systemic racism that is institutional or structural, and is a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks;

WHEREAS race is a social construct with no biological basis;

WHEREAS racism unfairly disadvantages specific individuals and communities, while unfairly giving advantages to other individuals and communities, and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources;

WHEREAS racism is a root cause of poverty and constricts economic mobility;

WHEREAS racism causes persistent discrimination and disparate outcomes in many areas of life, including housing, education, employment, and criminal justice, and is itself a social determinant of health;

WHEREAS racism and segregation have exacerbated a health divide resulting in people of color in Connecticut bearing a disproportionate burden of illness and mortality including COVID-19 infection and death, heart disease, diabetes, and infant mortality;

WHEREAS Black, Native American, Asian and Latino residents are more likely to experience poor health outcomes as a consequence of inequities in economic stability, education, physical environment, food, and access to health care and these inequities are, themselves, a result of racism;

WHEREAS more than 100 studies have linked racism to worse health outcomes; and

WHEREAS the collective prosperity and wellbeing of Windsor depends upon equitable access to opportunity for every resident regardless of the color of their skin:

Now, therefore, be it Resolved, that the Windsor Town Council

- (1) Assert that racism is a public health crisis affecting our town and all of Connecticut;*
- (2) Work to progress as an equity and justice-oriented organization, by continuing to identify specific activities to enhance diversity and to ensure antiracism principles across our leadership, staffing and contracting;*
- (3) Promote equity through all policies approved by the Town Council and enhance educational efforts aimed at understanding, addressing and dismantling racism and how it affects the delivery of human and social services, economic development and public safety;*
- (4) Improve the quality of the data our town collects and the analysis of that data—it is not enough to assume that an initiative is producing its intended outcome, qualitative and quantitative data should be used to assess inequities in impact and continuously improve;*
- (5) Continue to advocate locally for relevant policies that improve health in communities of color, and support local, state, regional, and federal initiatives that advance efforts to dismantle systemic racism;*
- (6) Further work to solidify alliances and partnerships with other organizations that are confronting racism and encourage other local, state, regional, and national entities to recognize racism as a public health crisis;*
- (7) Support community efforts to amplify issues of racism and engage actively and authentically with communities of color wherever they live; and*
- (8) Identify clear goals and objectives, including periodic reports to the Town Council, to assess progress and capitalize on opportunities to further advance racial equity.*

Councilor Black-Burke stated that while Windsor can be celebrated with many things, she does not want acts of racism and levels of stress in the black and brown communities to go unnoticed. Councilor Black-Burke shared an experience that comes from the town about a young fourteen year old boy who was outside riding his scooter in his own neighborhood, where he grew up. A

resident in the neighborhood called the police on this boy twice without a direct reason other than not being able to recognize the boy. Councilor Black-Burke wanted to bring attention to the stress level that the black and brown communities carry on a daily basis because of situations like this. Stress can do very damaging things to the body. Councilor Black-Burke referred to the Health Equity Solution, a company that helps to equate racism as a public health crisis.

Councilor Dobler stated that he supports the resolution, but when it does pass, we as Councilors and members of the town need to make sure that there are steps taken to make real change happen. Perhaps it could start with the Health and Safety committee. It has to be systemic, starting with a game plan, step by step. Councilor Dobler believes that while the resolution is a long time coming, it is something that will take years and not six months in order for there to be a fighting chance for meaningful change.

Councilor Rampulla Bress would like to speak out with full support of this resolution. This resolution is something that is necessary and important during this time. The resolution is a start to open up conversation. The community is expressing distress and their personal experiences that have hurt them. Even though Windsor is a diverse community and celebrates that, the resolution is important to declare that racism is a public health crisis. The resolution is not a divisive document, but rather a recognition that we care about everyone who lives in Windsor. The black and brown communities are expressing that this is an issue and the response, feelings and concerns about it are real and should be discussed.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe commented that there is no doubt that there are health conditions, mental and physical, stemmed from the stress of racism. Deputy Mayor McAuliffe stated that this is just the beginning, and we need to move forward. He fully approves the resolution.

Councilor Jepsen would like to support the resolution as a next step. There has been a lot done in the past with an equity study, police stops, and other things with the town, but there was not any real result. Councilor Jepsen stated that this topic will not be allowed to die, but rather to be resolved and keep it going. A data driven approach would be new and something that needs to be looked at and supported in order to educate for systemic change.

Mayor Trinks commented that, "the problem with a problem of a problem is not accepting there is a problem." Racism is a real problem and after two weeks of listening to stories from around the country, it is important to recognize that the problems do exist here. The first way to solve this problem is to accept that racism is real in Windsor and it needs to be addressed. During the vigil on Sunday, looking out onto the crowd, it was moving to see the diversity of the crowd and that they have accepted that there is a problem. Mayor Trinks looks forward to the continuation and for a commitment from this Council to not let this topic go quiet. Mayor Trinks wants to make the commitment to make Windsor be the safest it can be for everyone. He is in complete support of the resolution and continued efforts suggested in order to make positive change moving forward.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- c) Approve appropriation of \$187,000 to the Discovery Center Enterprise Fund from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe that a transfer of \$187,000 be approved from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance to cover the anticipated FY 20 additional operating loss due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Town Manager Souza said the FY 20 adopted budget for the Child Development Fund anticipated a loss of \$74,150. Based on current projections and taking into consideration COVID-19, we estimate the loss to be \$260,650. Therefore we are requesting an appropriation of \$187,000 to cover the loss above what was expected for FY 20.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- d) Approve Year End Purchase Orders

MOVED by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe, seconded by Councilor Jepsen that the FY 20 General Fund open purchase orders as of June 8, 2020 be approved until October 19, 2020.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe stated when goods and services are received and paid for in the next fiscal year, a purchase order must be opened to encumber the funds. By encumbering the funds, the Town Council is formally extending budgetary authority into the next fiscal year for that line item.

There are thirteen FY 20 General Fund open purchase orders as of June 8, 2020 totaling \$485,737 that are expected to be encumbered.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- e) Approve Year End Transfers

MOVED by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe, seconded by Councilor Rampulla Bress that the Director of Finance be granted authority to make year-end transfers in the General Fund of not more than \$5,000 per Service Unit.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

MOVED by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe, seconded by Councilor Rampulla Bress to transfer \$131,000 from Safety Services, of which \$120,000 will be transferred to Administrative Services and \$11,000 will be transferred to Health Services, to fund the projected year end deficits in those service units.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe stated the Town Council has traditionally granted the Finance Director the authority to transfer up to \$5,000 between service units (offsetting those that have gone over budget with those that have come in under budget) at the end of the fiscal year. In addition, we

are requesting the Town Council to approve the transfer of funds to service units that have gone over the adopted budget by more than \$5,000.

There are two service units, Administrative Services and Health Services that are projected to go over budget by amounts greater than \$5,000 for FY 20.

Administrative Services is projected to be over budget by \$120,000, which brings the FY 20 General Fund funding to the service unit to \$2,523,970 versus the adopted budget of \$2,403,970. This overage is due to anticipated unemployment costs for furloughed employees due to COVID-19, and technology purchases and upgrades related to improving network reliability, remote work capabilities, and data storage.

Health Services is projected to be over budget by \$11,000, which brings the FY 20 General Fund funding to the service unit to \$519,150 versus the adopted budget of \$508,150. This is due to projected expenses for contact tracing functions related to COVID-19.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

f) Introduce proposed Capital Improvement Program for Fiscal years 2021-2026

Town Manager Souza said the 6-year CIP provides a means for coordinating and prioritizing the capital project requests of various departments and agencies. The information that the CIP provides regarding the short-term and long-term financial impacts of undertaking projects enables policy makers to balance town priorities with the town's financial capability to pay for desired projects.

Historically, Windsor has adhered to recommended best practices in order to maintain a debt burden that is in line with available resources. Windsor holds its total debt service requirement to within 8% of total operating expenditures. This is consistent with recommendations from bond rating agencies that debt service be held to within 5% to 15% of the total operating budget. In recent years, borrowing has been structured to allow for the relatively quick retirement of outstanding debt.

Town Manager Souza outlined a few highlights of the proposed CIP.

Councilor Jepsen commented that some projects over the years have made it seem like there is a lot of phasing and balancing versus getting an authorization all at once for them which can effect *Town Charter* limits. There is also a plan for debt service that we need to be careful of as well. Can we approve by phases or should it be done the other way? Town Manager Souza responded by bringing up the Sage Park projects and mentioned the various upgrades needed, which is where the phasing came into play. It is the Council's prerogative if they want to approach it in a holistic authorization, which could result in going over the referendum amount and could delay other phases. Councilor Jepsen stated that in the past, things had been broken up to avoid a *Town Charter* requirement.

Mayor Trinks referred the CIP item to the Town Improvements Committee.

13) RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

MOVED by Councilor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Jepsen to:

- REAPPOINT Neill Sachdev as a Democratic member to the Conservation Commission for a five year term to expire November 30, 2023 or until a successor is appointed.
- REAPPOINT Kevin Washington as an Unaffiliated member to the Library Advisory Board for a three year term to expire April 30, 2022 or until a successor is appointed.
- REAPPOINT Richard Hazelton as a Democratic member to the Public Building Commission for a three year term to expire November 30, 2022 or until a successor is appointed.
- REAPPOINT Dawn Kirkwood as an Unaffiliated Alternate member to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a two year term to expire November 10, 2021 or until a successor is appointed.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

14) MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

- a) Minutes of the June 1, 2020 Public Hearing

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to approve the unapproved minutes of the June 1, 2020 Public Hearing as presented.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- b) Minutes of the June 1, 2020 Regular Town Council meeting

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to approve the unapproved minutes of the June 1, 2020 Regular Town Council meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

15) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Leroy Smith, 531 Edgewood, would like to address the topic of the public not showing up to the land conservation meetings. He believes that sometimes it feels as though there is not enough opportunities to participate and what should be considered is having term limits on the boards and commissions because there is not a change in people on the board, which may lead to more participation. Mr. Smith stated he is very pleased with the decision to go forward with declaring

racism as a public health crisis. He also stated that it is unfortunate that the tax abatement is going through.

Ashanti Osborne Martin, 85 Pierce Boulevard, wanted to thank the council for supporting racism as a public health crisis and looks forward to working with them in supporting this impactful action.

Elijah Oliver, 64 Timber Lane, wanted to thank the Town Council and the Town of Windsor for supporting and approving the resolution. As a youth advocate and educator, he is excited about the youth's future, but there is also concern for their safety. The youth are hopeful and pushing to have their voices heard but there is concern and fear, because they do not want to become a topic in the news. Mr. Oliver remains optimistic, prayerful, and is excited about this first step as declaring racism as a public health crisis. It is a way to hold ourselves and local and state governments accountable for addressing racism.

Lakisha Hyatt, 104 Benjamin Court, wanted to thank the Council for approving the resolution to declare racism as a public health crisis and for taking the first step. Ms. Hyatt has a commitment to participating in this first step.

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe, to enter Executive Session at 10:37 p.m. for the purpose of:

- a) Strategy and negotiations in respect to collective bargaining (Teamsters)

Motion Passed 9-0-0

16) EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

Present: Mayor Donald Trinks, Deputy Mayor Joe McAuliffe, Councilor Nuchette Black-Burke, Councilor Lisa Rampulla Bress, Councilor James Dobler, Councilor James Govoni, Councilor Donald Jepsen, Councilor Lenworth Walker, and Councilor Kenneth Wilkos

Staff: Peter Souza, Town Manager; Scott Colby, Assistant Town Manager; Amelia Bliss, Director of Human Resources

Councilor Walker left Executive Session at 10:55 p.m.

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to exit Executive Session at 10:58 p.m. and to re-enter the Regular Town Council meeting.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Walker not present)

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to extend the Regular Town Council meeting until midnight if needed.



Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Walker not present)

17) ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councilor Bress, seconded by Councilor Dobler to adjourn the meeting at 11:00 p.m.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Walker not present)

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth Brisebois
Recording Secretary