



**TOWN COUNCIL
VIRTUAL MEETING
OCTOBER 5, 2020
Regular Town Council Meeting**

APPROVED MINUTES

1) CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trinks called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

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

Absent: Councilor Nuchette Black-Burke

2) PRAYER OR REFLECTION

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe led the group in prayer/reflection. He gave a moment of silence for Don Ferrara, the Windsor High School basketball coach.

3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4) PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS

- a) Proclamation designating October 2020 as Fire Prevention month

Councilor Govoni read aloud the proclamation designating October 2020 as Fire Prevention month.

- b) Proclamation designating October 2020 as Manufacturing month in Windsor

Councilor Dobler read aloud the proclamation designating October 2020 as Manufacturing month in Windsor.

- c) Proclamation designating October 2020 as Community Planning month

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe read aloud the proclamation designating October 2020 as Community Planning month.

5) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Linda Alexander, 155 Fieldstone Drive, has been very fortunate to live within walking distance of a very large and tax dollar supported public space near Northwest Park. Ms. Alexander stated that within the last couple of years, the town has received state and local funds to restore the open space area for public use in the center of town. She added that additional Windsor tax dollars will be contributed to make open outdoor recreational space more accessible in this part of town. Residents of Deerfield and Wilson have asked to keep the area that is vacant in their part of town open for outdoor recreational use and to not have it developed. Ms. Alexander stated that she is very concerned that the residents in this part of town are being ignored. Especially during the pandemic, it would be helpful for these residents to have open outdoor space.

Coralee Jones, 1171 Matianuck Avenue, stated that the Wilson and Deerfield residents may be able to use the parks available in Windsor, but if the land is developed in their area, then they will no longer have the available outdoor recreational space offered to them. Ms. Jones would like to see it open as a recreational park for children and other community members to use in the Wilson/Deerfield communities. Ms. Jones then stated that the Wolcott building could become an assisted living space. She also wished everyone an early and healthy enjoyable Columbus Day.

Charles Windsor Jackson, III, 26 Wilson Avenue, spoke about the open lot in the Deerfield and Wilson community. The consensus from the residents who live there is to leave it as an open space for recreational use. Mr. Jackson also stated that he dislikes attending the meetings for Wilson/Deerfield because it seems as though there is not enough participation and attendance from the other community members. The Wilson/Deerfield advisory board is willing to get the message out to the community, however, it is just difficult to get everyone together. Mr. Jackson then thanked the Council for their time and reminded everyone to vote on November 3rd.

Ned Bacigalupo, 89 Farmstead Lane, stated his concerns about the petitions for the John Mason statue to stay on the Palisado Green and whether they were thoroughly looked at. He believes that the petition was not given enough consideration by the Council. Mr. Bacigalupo asked if he would be able to look at those names on the petition again. He also is against adding more housing to Windsor because it would be best to maintain a small-town environment. Mr. Bacigalupo stated that he is interested in helping with the organization of the concerts that will take place on the Palisado Green next summer.

6) COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilor Dobler- no comment.

Councilor Walker wanted to acknowledge that he admires the comments from the Mayor at the opening of the new facility at the Windsor Police Department. Councilor Walker specifically admired when Mayor Trinks stated the residents of Windsor looked at the referendum and decided that the Police Department needed to have new space and new areas to operate in, which means that Windsor loves its Police Department and supports it. Secondly, Councilor

Walker reminded everyone to take the COVID guidelines seriously and to stay safe. Also, always support the local businesses.

Councilor Govoni reminded everyone to check their smoke and CO2 alarms during fire prevention month. With Halloween coming up and there being extra lawn decorations and lighting, be sure to check extension cords in order to prevent fires from occurring.

Councilor Black-Burke - absent

Councilor Rampulla Bress reached out to the Jewish friends in the community hoping that they had a peaceful Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. Councilor Rampulla Bress also wanted to share that it is mental illness awareness week and everyone is affected by mental illness directly or indirectly. This week is dedicated to educating the public, fighting the stigma associated with mental illness, and to provide resources for support. If anyone in the public is struggling with mental illness, go to nani.org or google the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

Councilor Wilkos- no comment.

Councilor Jepsen- no comment.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe wished everyone a happy Indigenous Peoples day coming up on October 12th.

Mayor Trinks thanked Councilor Walker for his kind comments and in taking a moment to realize what an amazing Public Building Commission the Town of Windsor has and how quickly the project went with the volunteers' help. Mayor Trinks also thanked Chief Melanson and his staff for giving informative tours of the new facility.

7) REPORT OF APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSION

Mayor Trinks stated that the Board of Education and Town Planning & Zoning Commission submitted a written report to the Council and each Councilor has received a copy.

8) TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

COVID 19 Information

In terms of overall COVID-19 positive cases, we have done relatively well as a community over the past several months. At the end of June, we had 327 reported cases community wide, not including the various nursing homes. The community averaged 82 positive cases a month from March through June. In the past 3 months, we have had 88 reported cases for a monthly average of 26.

We urge everyone to continue to take the proper precautions to protect yourself and others against COVID-19. Please wear masks while in public, keep appropriate distance and regularly wash your hands.

Conversations on Race: Series 2020

The Town of Windsor Human Relations Commission will be sponsoring a series of conversations regarding racial and social justice entitled “RACE: THE SERIES.”

The first topic will be “Privilege” which will be led by Mr. Kevin Booker, Jr. on Sunday, October 11th, from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. via Zoom. To participate, please go to the town’s website page at www.townofwindsorct.com and click on the box entitled “Race: The Series”.

Human Relations Commission chairman Hon. Kevin Washington stated the series will also discuss:

- what the Town Council’s Declaration of Racism as a Public Health Crisis accomplishes
- how to be an ally
- what Black Lives Matter is about
- how to encourage youth participation

Additionally, the series will focus on diversity, disparity, and efforts to bridge and heal these issues. The book considered in the One Book—One Windsor program, *How To Be an Anti-Racist*, will be discussed as well.

Absentee Ballots

As of this afternoon, the Town Clerk’s Office has received 5,147 absentee ballot applications since September 17th and have mailed out 5,147 absentee ballots. There are no outstanding applications to process at this time. This is a fantastic feat!

By comparison, in the 2016 General Election, the office received 1,218 absentee ballot applications. Thank you to Town Clerk Anna Posniak and her team.

We have also received 499 completed voted absentee ballots as of today.

Persons wanting to vote via absentee ballot are urged to submit their application as soon as possible through either the US mail or by using the dedicated secure drop box to the rear of town hall.

Also a reminder, residents with a valid CT Driver’s License with their current address can register to vote online through the Secretary of the State’s website (<https://voterregistration.ct.gov/>). Residents can also utilize the online portal through the Secretary of the State’s website to view their voter registration status (<https://portaldir.ct.gov/sots/LookUp.aspx?fbclid=IwAR3VegIVxrS7pJeNJo5UG3v6hBVeH75CF Sjy-i2Df2E6kQOL05EeEpzLyhU>).

Kiwanis Canoe Race

The Kiwanis Canoe Race Food Drive will be held on Saturday, October 10th from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM on the Town Green. The Canoe Race is normally run in conjunction with the Windsor

Chili Challenge which will not be held this year. This year's race is open to the general public as well as civic groups. The canoe race benefits the Windsor Food and Fuel banks. Participants are requested to donate food and/or cash. Donations can be dropped off on the Windsor Green from 9:00 to Noon. Look for the canoes! Trophies will be awarded to the civic group that donates the most food and the group that donates the most food and cash combined.

Community Food Distribution

The town of Bloomfield has asked West Hartford and Windsor to join in a series of food distribution events this October. This multi-town partnership is possible in part through the Farms to Family Food Box Program sponsored by the State of Connecticut and the USDA.

On Fridays during the rest of October, the drive-through food distribution event will take place between 10:00 AM and 2:30 PM at the Rehoboth Church of God, 1170 Blue Hill Ave in Bloomfield.

This event is open to all households in each of the three towns.

Volunteers are being recruited to help out. If interested, please call Windsor Social Services at 860-285-1839.

Councilor Dobler commented on how impressive Anna and her staff have been in preparing the townspeople for this upcoming voting term, especially by sending out over 5,700 absentee ballots, which is no small feat and should be recognized.

Councilor Walker brought up the issues of speeding in town and wanted to know if it would be possible to set up more permanent speed radar detectors or get more of the portable ones from the Police Department in certain parts of town such as Poquonock and Palisado Avenues. Town Manager Souza stated that he will look into this matter further.

9) REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Town Improvements Committee – Councilor Dobler stated there will be a meeting within the next few weeks. There has been a pause so the new members of the Wilson/Deerfield Committee can be sworn in.

Special Projects Committee – Councilor Dobler

Health & Safety Committee – Councilor Dobler spoke on Councilor Black-Burke's behalf stating that the Health & Safety Committee will be meeting on October 8th.

Personnel Committee – Councilor Rampulla Bress said the next meeting will be on October 14th. Councilor Rampulla Bress also thanked Councilor Black-Burke and Councilor Walker for their continued dedication to the committee. There are more vacancies available for any town members interested in joining the Board of Assessment Appeals or the Conservation Commission. The applications to become members can be found on the town website.

Finance Committee – Deputy Mayor McAuliffe stated there may be a meeting by the end of October.

10) ORDINANCES – None

11) UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

12) NEW BUSINESS

- a) Consider approval of Manufacturing Machinery Equipment exemption for Spencer Turbine

MOVED by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe, seconded by Councilor Dobler to grant a manufacturing machinery equipment exemption per CGS Section 12-94e to Spencer Turbine for the October 2019 Grant List with the company remaining liable for the late filing penalty.

Town Manager Souza stated that current state law provides the authority to municipalities to grant a manufacturing property exemption for a company that did not file for the manufacturing exemption on time. Prior to the state law changing, a company that missed the filing deadline was able to ask their local state legislator to file “special legislation” to provide an exemption of the local tax on eligible machinery if the company filed documents with the Town Assessor within a certain time frame. Each year, there were several of these requests on a state-wide basis.

Spencer Turbine has reached out to town staff to discuss requesting relief per state law. Pursuant to state law, and in order to grant an exemption or relief, the Town Council would need to consider the request.

The company’s FY 21 personal property tax bill was approximately \$87,405. The property tax on their manufacturing machinery & equipment is \$48,077 and the 25% penalty is \$12,019, for a total of \$60,096. The balance is related to personal property not eligible for the manufacturing equipment exemption. The company has paid the tax liability for the non-eligible equipment.

Councilor Jepsen stated that there are certain amounts of money set aside for events like this and would like to know if there is a certain amount of money set aside for this particular event. Town Manager Souza confirmed that the company filing for an exemption was built into the FY 2021 budget, and at this point there are not any other manufacturers that did not file the exemption on time.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Black-Burke absent)

- b) Authorize grant submittal for extension of East Barber Street River Trail

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Councilor Rampulla Bress to authorize the submittal of a grant application to the Connecticut Department of Transportation’s Community Connectivity Grant Program for the Riverwalk Multi-Use Trail project.

Town Manager Souza stated that Riverfront Recapture has acquired 60 acres of riverfront property on the Hartford / Windsor town line. This purchase allows Riverfront Recapture to construct a multi-use path from the Greater Hartford Jaycees Boathouse in Hartford to the Windsor town line. Permitting is occurring this winter and construction will hopefully follow in the latter part of 2021. There would remain a gap of roughly 850 feet to connect with the existing trail in Windsor.

Town and Riverfront Recapture staff have identified a grant program through the CT DOT to help fund the construction of the trail in Windsor. This grant program is a competitive process and applications are due October 16th. The town and Riverfront Recapture staff are working to prepare an application submittal.

Councilor Jepsen stated that he is very excited and looking forward for this development to be done, especially because he has a deep connection to the area where the marina is being put in.

Councilor Wilkos would like to know how many linear feet this project will be adding. Councilor Wilkos would also like to know about the area inbetween the 850 feet and the existing boat launch. Town Manager Souza stated the gap that is currently funded through a grant that was received from Hartford and the riverfront, is roughly 850 linear feet, which is what the grant application would go towards, in order to cross Decker's Brook and connect to a trail that was built by the town.

Councilor Govoni wanted to confirm that the grant is only for the 850 feet of land. Town Manager Souza stated that the cost is mainly for structure to span Decker's Brook. Councilor Govoni stated that there is currently a bridge down by Meadow Brook.

Councilor Rampulla Bress is also excited about this project especially that the intention is to create more accessible places in town for the community to use and enjoy.

Councilor Govoni stated that he hopes there is success with the grant and that it is very important that this link is made. If it does not come to fruition, it should remain on the agenda to make it happen. This will be a big plus for Wilson and Deerfield and everyone on the other side of the river.

Councilor Walker stated that he enjoys the enthusiasm for this riverside trail. He would like to know if there is in fact communication with Loomis Chaffee to extend the trail from the center of town southwards. Town Manager Souza made a clarifying comment stating that there have not been any recent conversations with Loomis Chaffee and the potential alignments. He looks forward to having these conversations during the winter.

Councilor Jepsen would like to know if the Air Corps needs to get involved with the bridge in the area. Town Manager Souza stated that it will most likely need to be reviewed by the Army Corps, which could be considered a general permit and would make it a faster process. They would have to be consulted and have a permit processed through them as well as DEEP. Councilor Jepsen questioned if the trail is still going to be used by the Ebony Horse Women for the horses.

Town Manager Souza stated that he will need to have a conversation with that organization again to see the level of their interest.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Black-Burke absent)

13) RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS – None

14) MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

a) Minutes of the September 21, 2020 Regular Town Council meeting

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to approve the unapproved minutes of the September 21, 2020 Regular Town Council meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Black-Burke absent)

15) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS - None

16) EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

17) ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe, seconded by Councilor Rampulla Bress to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 p.m.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Black-Burke absent)

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth Brisebois
Clerk of the Town Council