



**TOWN COUNCIL
VIRTUAL MEETING
JANUARY 4, 2021
Regular Town Council Meeting**

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

1) CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trinks called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

Present: Mayor Donald Trinks, Deputy Mayor Joseph 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 Govoni led the group in prayer/reflection.

3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Govoni led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4) PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS - None

5) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Sally Grossman, 106 Niles Road, wanted to express her concern for the petition for the Millbrook Village community. Ms. Grossman had the chance to read the petition which she found disturbing as well as attended the last Housing Authority meeting. Ms. Grossman asked at the meeting what steps the Housing Authority was taking to address the issues that have been brought up and outlined in the petition. Members of the Windsor Housing Authority and other commissioners accused multiple residents of being untruthful when speaking about their concerns. The Housing Authority also stated during the meeting that the delays in the construction had nothing to do with them and it was not their responsibility to address the issue. Ms. Grossman observed that the Housing Authority is not taking these issues seriously. Another concern from Ms. Grossman is that some of the allegations in the petition potentially amount to elder abuse. Ms. Grossman stated that she understands the Town of Windsor does not have authority over the Housing Authority but does have control of who is appointed and/or removed from the Windsor Housing Authority, which may be necessary under the current situation. Ms. Grossman urged the Council to make sure that the residents in Millbrook Village are safe and taken care of.

George Slate, 74 Ethan Drive, stated that he is not in agreement with the amount of money being spent on racism as a public health crisis resolution. Mr. Slate would like for the Council to be transparent and disclose all the costs that will implement the resolution. It seems that \$100,000 will be spent in the current FY21, at the town level. Mr. Slate addressed the agenda item

regarding diversity, equity and inclusion training, in hopes that the training is not approved in tonight's meeting. The proper way to budget for something such as this is to budget for it in the annual budget. Mr. Slate noted that in the last meeting when voting on the FY22 budget, it was decided to not include the \$35,000 for DEI training. In the October meeting for the Health and Safety committee, it was indicated that the \$35,000 DEI training would be an annual cost. In order to be transparent and accountable, Mr. Slate would like the Council to add a full status report of the implementation of the resolution and update the financial impact, which in June, was indicated to be none. It is a shame for taxpayers that you are paying overtime so some employees can attend unplanned training. In the future, please budget for the training and eliminate overtime spending. The implementation of the resolution should be done by the full nine-member Town Council, not by one of the three-person committees. Mr. Slate does not oppose the DEI training.

Jane Garibay, Executive Director of First Town Downtown (FTDT), called to report on what First Town Downtown has been up to. The most recent success was the torchlight parade. Scott Hoffman, a board member and chairperson of FTDT, did a wonderful job. The event was done safely with the roads marked and followed the CDC guidelines. Unfortunately, the concert on the green has been canceled. There have been conversations about neighboring towns holding similar events, but the Town of Windsor does not meet the CDC guidelines for that type of event because there is typically more than five hundred people in attendance. FTDT will be honoring the contracts that were done this coming summer and FTDT is excited and hopeful that the plans will be able to come to fruition this coming season. There have been many more initiatives taken by FTDT over the years. The Farmers Market was another success that was done safely, and it was one of the best seasons to date. Ms. Garibay announced that January 8th will be her last day with First Town Downtown, as her other commitments take more time, so therefore she will be making more time for herself. A local woman, Genevieve Lattimer will be taking over Ms. Garibay's position. Ms. Lattimer has the qualifications and passion for this position and the team is very excited about her onboarding.

Mayor Trinks thanked Ms. Garibay for everything she has done for First Town Downtown.

Ned Bacigalupo, 89 Farmstead Lane, spoke about the summer concert series and how it is a time sensitive matter as they have a deadline in January. This deadline is perplexing to Mr. Bacigalupo that they book these over six months in advance. First Town Downtown stated that they have bands under contract from last year, which Mr. Bacigalupo does not agree with. He asked that the summer concert series be taken away from FTDT and the funds from last year's canceled series be reimbursed and rolled into this year. Mr. Bacigalupo stated they canceled the outdoor concerts when the residents of Windsor needed them the most. An outdoor concert would have been within the guidelines of the Governor's lockdown protocols. Mr. Bacigalupo would like to know where the funds from last year went. Mr. Bacigalupo believes it is disrespectful to ask bands to play for free. He also offered to pay to play and they would not accept him and his band under those circumstances either. Concerts could bring life back into the downtown area of Windsor. Mr. Bacigalupo stated that good bands will not participate for a \$500 compensation.

Lucas Eddy, a resident of the Windsor Housing Authority Apartments, stated that he dropped off a letter to Mayor Trinks last week. Mr. Eddy wanted to follow up on the article from December 26th about the Housing Authority and their development programs. He would also like to highlight the topic of residents being targeted and retaliated against. Mr. Eddy explained that his toilet broke, and for six days he was not allowed to live at his apartment. He has been a resident for ten years and never had an issue until there were new members on the Housing Authority commission. Since Diane Holloman and Urleen Naughton became involved is when Mr. Eddy started having problems. There have been times when the Housing Authority has twisted his words, not renewed his lease, and lied about many things. Mr. Eddy would like Mayor Trinks to reach out to him regarding his letter and would like the issues with the Housing Authority to be addressed as soon as possible.

6) COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilor Dobler stated that there is light at the end of the tunnel. There has been a round of second vaccinations administered for some members of the medical community. Councilor Dobler thanked Jane Garibay for everything she has done for First Town Downtown and all other activities that she has been involved with in the Town of Windsor. Thank you to all of the callers who have called during the public comment session to express feelings and concerns. A few weeks ago, a couple called about a concern with noise caused by the Amazon project. Since then the issue is in the works of being resolved. Some issues need to be communicated during public comment so the Council can be made aware of them. Please continue to communicate these issues and concerns.

Councilor Walker asked everyone to continue to stay safe and practice COVID precautions. As always, support our local businesses. Councilor Walker commented on some of the happenings going on in town, particularly with the Housing Authority, stating that it would be helpful if the entire Council had a steady source of information coming in from tenants, elders, family members, etc. Some councilors receive some communication and others do not. One person from the public comment session stated that what is going on from the Housing Authority is considered elder abuse. Councilor Walker stated that looking back on all the petitions and complaints that have been received, he has a sense that most of the council members would like to see something done about this. More information needs to be shared and readily available.

Councilor Govoni thanked Jane Garibay for all the years she has spent serving our community. Councilor Govoni looked back on the many projects he worked on with Ms. Garibay and it was a lot of fun. Ms. Garibay will be greatly missed. There was a letter received from Eric Weiner on Palisado Avenue. He lives near that intersection and mentioned that he hears trucks going by at 3:00 a.m. Councilor Govoni would like to know if the officers in that area could be on patrol during that time to investigate more.

Councilor Black-Burke wished everyone a Happy New Year. We made it through 2020 and will surely move through 2021. Councilor Black-Burke encouraged everyone to join the meeting on Wednesday, January 6th, or on Wednesday, January 13th, for the one-hour meeting that will take place to discuss the superintendent search. Additionally, a survey opened, and that information

is available on the school district website. The survey will close on February 12th. Councilor Black-Burke encouraged everyone to participate in the survey. This is a costly investment and it is important that everyone is involved in the process. Councilor Black-Burke also shared that the Windsor Public Library is sponsoring an event on January 9th, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., called "Let's Talk About Race." More information can be found on the library's website. Lastly, Councilor Black-Burke stated that she has received a letter at her home regarding the Windsor Housing Authority. Thank you to all the callers and people writing letters who have mentioned what needs to be done and how as a Town Council we should get involved. Something will be done, and we are working on it.

Councilor Rampulla Bress wished everyone a Happy New Year. Councilor Rampulla Bress thanked Jason Santos for putting up a holiday display in front of his home. Mr. Santos invites all Windsor residents to view the display and only asks that they bring a donation for the local food bank. Mr. Santos collected a large amount of donations for the Windsor food bank. Councilor Rampulla Bress also thanked Jane Garibay and First Town Downtown, specifically for the operation of Project Santa, which was also a great success this year. There were many small and large businesses, including Amazon, who made some very significant donations this year. Thank you to the community members who have written, called, and emailed to the Council, especially during the Town Council meetings. It is very important to hear what you have to say. A goal of the Town Council is to provide service to our citizens. When communication from the public is received, Councilor Rampulla Bress believes that it is a Council member's job to respond and address those concerns. We are hearing you and are listening to you. Please continue to reach out to the Council with your concerns. The Town Council is the appointing authority to the Housing Authority Commission. Councilor Rampulla Bress stated that the Council recently appointed two new members this year and will continue to fill vacancies. Your concerns will continue to be first and foremost in our thoughts.

Councilor Wilkos wished everyone a Happy New Year, with hopes that 2021 will be a good year. Thank you to all of the callers who have expressed their frustrations and concerns that are going on in town. Councilor Wilkos assured everyone that they have the Council's ears. Hopefully we will be able to come to some resolution on some of these issues soon. Councilor Wilkos mentioned that Town Manager Souza may be addressing some of the truck traffic issues on Palisado Avenue tonight. This is something that the Council has been working on. Lastly, Councilor Wilkos thanked Jane Garibay for her years of service to First Town Downtown and to Genevieve Lattimer congratulations.

Councilor Jepsen congratulated Jane Garibay on her service and wished her well in her new endeavors in Hartford. Councilor Jepsen asked for confirmation regarding the email about the Housing Authority being forwarded to all councilors as he had not received it yet. We are all on the same page regarding the Housing Authority but there has not been a plan of action put in place yet. There have been three FOI requests. Councilor Jepsen is interested to see what the Chairman's response was to the state CHFA. The start of this would be to see what the Chairman's response is to all the allegations. If we have to FOI that response, then we should. We should meet as a full council to figure out the next step. The residents need to know we are taking action. Councilor Jepsen concluded by wishing everyone a Happy New Year and to be safe.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe thanked everyone from the community who called during the public comment session. Deputy Mayor McAuliffe also thanked Jane Garibay for everything she has done for First Town Downtown. Genevieve Lattimer is an excellent choice to take Ms. Garibay's place. Costs for the DEI training is on the agenda. This is the first direct expense to the resolution. Regarding transparency and fiscal year planning, when the resolution was adopted, we had already adopted the FY21 budget. There are not any efforts to hide the numbers. Deputy Mayor McAuliffe stated that he will respond to Mr. Slate's email that was sent. If you are any person who works in industry, this type of training is normal. It should not be looked at as unusual or an expense that we cannot take on. Deputy Mayor McAuliffe thanked Mr. Eddy for his comments. We are aware of the Housing Authority issues and they are being addressed. We understand how important it is to protect the people who live under the Housing Authority, especially during these times.

Mayor Trinks responded to the public commentator about First Town Downtown and the concert series. Most of the bands that are set up are set up through sponsors. People typically approach FTDT and request to sponsor a band. There is not any money going into the hands of FTDT. If there was a series that was canceled, we simply did not pay the band. Mayor Trinks respectfully disagreed with the caller, stating that there have been very good quality bands who have performed on the green this year. It was not a decision made lightly by the board of FTDT to cancel the series. Mayor Trinks thanked Mr. Eddy for his letter and call regarding the Windsor Housing Authority. The issue is ongoing and Mayor Trinks wanted to remind everyone that the only thing the Council has control over is the board/commission. Many of us have spoken our concerns publicly of the actions/inactions of the board. We continue, on behalf of the Council, to encourage everyone to contact us about their concerns. Mayor Trinks is looking forward to 2021.

7) REPORT OF APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSION

a) Board of Education

Leonard Lockhart, President of the Board of Education, stated the interim superintendent will be presenting the budget for school year 2021-2022 on Wednesday, January 20th, before the regular scheduled meeting for the Board of Education. After the presentation there will be a half an hour provided for public comment. We are anticipating Dr. Hill, interim superintendent to present a very robust and aggressive budget. He has been encouraged to present a budget as if he is the superintendent. He will not be tentative in his budget approach. Afterward, we will be going through our customary process. Mr. David Furie, the vice president, will also be serving as finance chairman. We will have the remote/hybrid virtual meetings on January 26th, January 30th, and February 2nd. There will be an allotted half an hour of time for public comment and everyone is encouraged to participate. There has also been an email address created, budgetcomment@windsorct.org, so anyone has the ability to email the finance committee. The emails will go directly to Mr. Furie and Sally Brown, Executive Assistant to Superintendent of Windsor Schools. Audit information will be on windsorct.org as part of the banner. There will also be a tab on the website for the current budget proposal as well as the previous budgets going back three to five years.

We are in the midst of a superintendent search. There will be multiple opportunities for cohorts to engage in the search. The town will be hosting two evening opportunities for community members to share their insight on the hiring of the next superintendent. Those opportunities will be on January 6th and January 13th. The search committee is the committee of the whole board. The current interim superintendent has no knowledge of anything that is associated with the superintendent search. There will be cohorts at the school, a cohort for the Town Council, and there will be an opportunity for each councilor to discuss the superintendent search one on one. The cohorts will cover every demographic within the Town of Windsor. This is a process that is running concurrently with the application process. The cohort and application process will be run simultaneously, and it is anticipated to be ending at the same time as well.

There was a voicemail received from the Windsor Board of Education District Office regarding being in contact with the consultant. There are links on the district website that will direct you to the superintendent search details. January, February, and mid-March will be very busy for the Board of Education. We are all Windsor strong and want what is best for the Town of Windsor.

Councilor Dobler thanked Mr. Lockhart for his report and directed two questions to him. The first being if Mr. Lockhart could discuss the hybrid learning situation that is going on and what the short-term and long-term plans are. Mr. Lockhart explained that right now, the schools are still participating in hybrid learning. Dr. Hill would like to have everyone return to the school building by the beginning of the second semester. Dr. Hill is still working with the opening committee to make wise decisions. This remains a fluid situation and can change with time.

Councilor Dobler's second question is regarding the search for the new superintendent. Councilor Dobler stated that generally, the search company is not paid unless the hiring company uses someone that they found. From a cost standpoint, Councilor Dobler would like to know how it is set up. The search firm will still get a stipend whether the person who is hired was selected by the search firm or not. Councilor Dobler wanted to ensure that there was not a large amount of money to find a new superintendent. Mr. Lockhart explained that the consultant was paid at the signing of the contract and the consultant will be paid at the end of the posting. Once the superintendent has been seated and the contract has been signed, he will be paid again. As of right now that is costing the town \$10,500 for his services, with a two-year guarantee that if the search has failed, that firm will have to come back to do another search free of charge aside from any administrative expenses.

Councilor Dobler followed up asking if there is a difference in the cost that they will receive whether the Board of Education decides to hire someone they found or someone outside of that search. Mr. Lockhart stated that there would not be any cost difference. The Board of Education is looking for that recommendation directly from the search firm.

Councilor Black-Burke stated that she is under the impression that Windsor has always used this process when searching for a superintendent. Mr. Lockhart confirmed that is also his understanding. Councilor Black-Burke would like confirmation that there will be a listing of everything that will be implemented in the search. Councilor Black-Burke has received questions from many individuals about the process and if this process is always used in Windsor. Is this something that could be a part of the artifacts as far as what the process is in the Town of

Windsor? Mr. Lockhart stated that it is well received and he clarified this process is not just standard with the Town of Windsor but is rather standardized throughout the state of Connecticut. This is a very distinct process when you are engaging with educators at all levels.

Councilor Rampulla Bress thanked President Lockhart and the Board of Education for the thorough and detailed process for the superintendent search. It is wonderful to see the Board of Education going above and beyond to have everyone necessary involved safely. During COVID it must be especially difficult to reach out to all these different factions of the community.

Mayor Trinks thanked Mr. Lockhart for his thorough report.

8) TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Winter Parking Rules

Just a reminder that until April 15th, there is no parking on Windsor streets between the hours of 1:00 AM and 6:00 AM and no parking on any street during a snow or ice storm that has been in progress for one hour or more. Also, please do not leave your vehicle on the street in such a position that it impedes snowplowing operations or the free flow of traffic.

As the snow arrives this year, please remember that the town ordinance requires all property owners to clear snow from the sidewalk (and fire hydrants if there is one on your property) within 12 hours after the storm.

Electric Vehicle Charging Station

The EV Charging Station was recently installed before Christmas. This past week, Eversource was on site to connect power to the unit. We are working with the contractor to prepare for the commissioning of the unit and software. We anticipate this to occur shortly in the next two weeks. Per Town Council direction, there will not be a user fee through the end of June 2021.

Pierson Lane Zoning Violation

Town staff has continued to work with the town attorney to address apparent zoning violations on Pierson Lane. Several months ago, the Zoning Enforcement Officer issued orders to the property owner to comply with the zoning regulations. There has not been compliance, therefore the town attorney filed action with the court system requesting a court order to eliminate the alleged violations within the industrial zone. Unfortunately due to significant back logs within the state court system, a hearing on the matter was delayed several months. A preliminary court hearing is scheduled for this month. The town attorney will urge the matter be fully heard and resolved by the court as soon as possible, but again with the court docket being backlogged, there may be continued delay in the court proceedings.

Windsor Train Station Upgrades

The CT DOT is still planning on making improvements to the train platforms at Central Street. The work consists of constructing a high level platform on the west side of the tracks and to the north side of the train station building. Modifications will be made to the existing platform on the east side of the tracks. Some minor utility work has taken place.

DOT's project contractor and Amtrak are working on an access agreement and safety procedures for work to be performed within the vicinity of the tracks. Schedule for work to begin on the platforms remains to be determined until a final agreement is in place. Per our agreement with CT DOT, the project contractor is utilizing a portion of the Mechanic Street parking lot as a staging area.

COVID – 19 VACCINATION UPDATE

The Health Department, in conjunction with the Town of South Windsor, held our first two vaccination clinics the week of December 28th. 167 persons received the vaccine. We had great success with volunteer support and the gymnasium layout at 330 Windsor Ave worked well.

We are following CDC and CT Department of Public Health guidelines as to eligibility by tiers.

Phase 1 Tier 1a group will include:

1. Healthcare Workers (MD's, nurses etc.):
2. Medical 1st responders: (EMS and police)
3. Public Health staff and vaccination volunteers

Phase 1 Tier 1b group will likely include town and school employees, other critical workforce employees in industries such as transit and postal service, grocery stores and manufacturing and potentially adults over 75 years old. This tier could be authorized in late January depending on vaccine availability. Please note the State has yet to finalize who will be eligible in Tier 1b. Hopefully, clarity from the State will happen within the next couple of weeks.

Currently, plans are to conduct one clinic per week at the community center in Wilson as well as one a week in South Windsor through the next 3 weeks or so.

Eligible persons are able to get the vaccination at any clinic location across the state – they are not restricted to their hometown. This is to ensure that those eligible to receive a vaccination will be able to receive it as soon as possible.

Health Department staff is in the process of working on the logistics of 'standing up' a potential second weekly clinic in Windsor starting in late January or when the State authorizes Tier 1b vaccinations.

Please continue to take COVID-19 precautions during the holidays. Remember to mask up and maintain proper social distancing.

Councilor Walker thanked Town Manager Souza for the information given during this report. Regarding the truck traffic on Pierson Lane, where complaints are stemming from, Councilor Walker stated that he knows there has been work done with the town attorney to address this issue. He would like to know if there is anything else that can be done in the interim, such as fining them, since the people involved with the truck traffic are not complying. Town Manager Souza stated that under our current situation, we do not have the ability to issue fines for zoning violations. There is the possibility for the Town Council to adopt a state statute to allow for fines to be issued. It is Town Manager Souza's understanding that they would not be able to be issued

for these infractions since they are allegedly occurring prior to an adoption of such an ordinance. Generally, we can get compliance in terms of zoning violations or those individuals can go to the zoning board of appeals in order to be able to have their situations heard there. Since we are not getting voluntary compliance, this is something we can move forward with. Town Manager Souza stated that we will continue to converse with the town attorney about what we can do to help ease the truck traffic issue.

9) REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Town Improvements Committee – Councilor Dobler - nothing to report currently.

Special Projects Committee – Councilor Dobler – nothing to report.

Health & Safety Committee – Councilor Black-Burke will be scheduling the next meeting between now and the end of January.

Personnel Committee – Councilor Rampulla Bress announced that the Personnel Committee will be meeting on January 6th at 6:00 p.m. to continue to fill openings on boards and commissions. Councilor Rampulla Bress directed the community to the town’s website as there are still board and commission positions open. The application can be accessed on the town website.

Councilor Wilkos directed a question to Councilor Rampulla Bress. He would like to know if there are openings on the Windsor Housing Authority committee. Councilor Rampulla Bress confirmed that there is a tenant commissioner position that is up for reappointment and since there is another applicant, according to the rules of order, we will be interviewing the other applicant.

Finance Committee – Deputy Mayor McAuliffe nothing to report this evening.

10) ORDINANCES

11) UNFINISHED BUSINESS

12) NEW BUSINESS

- a) Introduce a bond ordinance entitled, “AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$1,100,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE L.P. WILSON COMMUNITY CENTER BOILER REPLACEMENT PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$1,100,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION.”

RESOLVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe that the reading into the minutes of the text of the bond ordinance entitled, “AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$1,100,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE L.P. WILSON COMMUNITY CENTER BOILER REPLACEMENT PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$1,100,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION” is hereby waived, the full text of the ordinance having been distributed to each member of the Council and copies being made

available to those persons attending this meeting; and that the full text of the ordinance be recorded with the minutes of this meeting.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to introduce a bond ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$1,100,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE L.P. WILSON COMMUNITY CENTER BOILER REPLACEMENT PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$1,100,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION."

Bob Jarvis, Public Works Director, and Whit Przech, Building Facilities Manager, stated the boiler replacement portion of the original CIP project has received a financial incentive award from the CNG Boiler Modernization Program. CNG's approved contractor has presented a proposal to the town that will include demolition of existing 1958 and 1978 boilers, the domestic hot water boiler, piping, pumps and electrical controls. The proposal also includes asbestos abatement. The contractor will supply and install three new high efficiency boilers, with 96.2% efficiency ratings, all necessary primary pumps, VFD drives, and piping. All engineering, permits, inspections, start-ups and commissioning is also included in the contractor's proposal.

It is estimated that this project will reduce annual utility costs by \$15,600.

Councilor Dobler stated that it seems that all the upgrades that are being made are helping us save substantially by either the state or different firms reimbursing us with rebates. In this situation it looks like we are saving two-thirds of the actual cost. Councilor Dobler would like to know if that is the typical type of rebate. Mr. Przech stated that it is not typical at all. CNG has a special modernization program that they instituted last year and are continuing this year. When the contractor places his bid to CNG, he has the option of going anywhere from 40-70%. We put in for 65% of this project and CNG approved it.

Councilor Govoni stated that it was noted that one of the boilers is 58 years old and it is amazing that we have gone this far without having to change it. Councilor Govoni applauded the Town Manager and the staff for this incentive.

Councilor Jepsen would like to know, because LP Wilson is an educational setting, if it would be possible to further reduce the cost matching, like we do for schools. Town Manager Souza stated that there are very limited opportunities, given that the percentage of that floor space that is used for education is very minimal. If you look at it from a timing perspective, this work needed to be complete by October 1st. In order to go through a state process, it would exclude us from the ability to meet that timeline CNG has for the rebate. Councilor Jepsen stated that he was anticipating a twenty-year bond and it seems like a few years ago we would have been in the twelve-year range for something like this. Councilor Jepsen would like to know if it is envisioned that at some point we can get back to the twelve-year range. Town Manager Souza stated that the hope is to be able to get back to fifteen-year terms within the next two bonding cycles.

Councilor Wilkos would like to know about the bond and if we would be bumping up projects or if we would be using the funds that have already been received from that bond in terms of the rebate. Town Manager Souza stated that from a long-term perspective, we would not be borrowing until Spring 2022. We would borrow the net difference. For a one-year note, we would borrow approximately \$1.1 million that is needed. Then we would take the rebates and pay back a portion of the \$1.1 million and then borrow, long-term, the difference which could be anywhere between \$375,000 to \$475,000.

Councilor Wilkos would like to know what it costs to pull bonds in the short-term. Is it worth doing it knowing the costs that are associated with that versus using our general fund money and then putting the money immediately back in upon receipt of the rebate dollars. We are not making money out of the general fund right now because interest rates are at zero. Councilor Wilkos suggested that we use our funds and bond it ourselves to repay that back at zero cost. Town Manager Souza stated that is an option. The decision in terms of how we arrange for that could be discussed in the second meeting in January. We would have to look at the authorization process. If there is a cash appropriation, this \$1.1 million may put us into a special town meeting. We would also need to look at the overall planned use for our general fund reserve. Again, that would be a \$350,000 to \$450,000 use of our general fund reserve. If the Council looks at what other needs there are over the next two or three years, that would be the other consideration to have. Councilor Wilkos stated that it would be nice to take a zero percent interest loan from ourselves.

Councilor Wilkos would like to know if there are any other physical changes being done to the building as far as the heating delivery is concerned. Mr. Przech confirmed that there are a lot of registers in the building. The savings are small for this project at around \$15,000 in annual operating costs, but overall, there has been a reduction of annual operating costs by \$109,000 a year. Town Manager Souza stated that the air handling units and the other distribution system is the second phase of the project. Mr. Przech stated that these boilers will provide heating for existing units.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- b) Set a Public Hearing for January 19, 2021 at 7:20 PM for a bond ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$1,100,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE L.P. WILSON COMMUNITY CENTER BOILER REPLACEMENT PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$1,100,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION."

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe that a Public Hearing be held at the Windsor Town Hall on January 19, 2021 at 7:20 p.m. (prevailing time) on the following ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$1,100,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE L.P. WILSON COMMUNITY CENTER BOILER REPLACEMENT PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$1,100,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION" and "FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk is authorized and directed to post and publish notice of said Public Hearing."

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- c) Approve an appropriation of \$35,000 from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training

MOVED by Councilor Black-Burke, seconded by Councilor Rampulla Bress to approve an appropriation of \$35,000 from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance for diversity, equity, and inclusion training.

Town Manager Souza stated that we have communicated to the full council as well as the Health & Safety Committee about the potential for training opportunities related to diversity, equity and inclusion. To date we've been using existing operating dollars to have the police officers and civilians at the Windsor Police department go through fair and impartial policing training. This was an eight-hour training session that was offered by the National Association of Black Law Enforcement officers. This agenda item is a request to continue to deploy training throughout the organization for full-time and part-time employees.

Amelia Bliss, Director of Human Resources, stated that the training being discussed tonight is related to the resolution that was approved in June of 2020, declaring racism as a public health crisis. One of the objectives in the resolution was to identify specific activities to enhance diversity and ensure anti-racism principals across our leadership staffing and contracting. To help achieve this goal, there was an advertisement to propose bids for diversity, equity, and inclusion training for town employees and potentially elected officials if so desired. At this time we are asking the Town Council to consider the appropriation of funding to move forward with this training initiative. There were twelve responses to the RFP and the pricing ranged from \$22,500 to \$186,867 as well as a variety of approaches the vendors put forward to the scope of services. A staff committee interviewed several consultants to go through their proposals and to clarify their approaches to the proposed training. Racial Equity Group was selected, which is based in Irving, Texas. Based on the funding authorization, we would like to finalize the scope of work and the timeline, if it is approved by the Council.

The objectives of the training are in line with the resolution of enhancing diversity and ensuring anti-racism principles throughout the organization. It will cover systemic racism, what it is, and how it has perpetuated racial injustice and inequities. It will also cover implicit and unconscious bias, their impacts, how to recognize our own biases and interpret them, micro-aggressions and how to recognize them, their impacts and how to respond effectively when they occur; cultural awareness and inclusion, how to use this information to build skills to foster and sustain an inclusive environment for employees and those we serve.

This training proposal has frontline employees as one cohort for training and supervisors as a second, recognizing that supervisors make decisions within the organization that impact others such as service delivery, policy decisions, and hiring decisions. There is an additional training component for supervisors to help look at those decisions with an equity lens. Approximately 180 full-time and regular part-time employees are anticipated to participate in the training session. With the agenda item summary, we included a breakdown of the topics covered for

those proposed trainings. The cost will be an estimated \$35,000 and it is recommended that it be appropriated from the general fund balance.

Councilor Dobler thanked Ms. Bliss for putting this proposal together. Councilor Dobler stated that it seems there were twelve responses with a range of pricing between \$22,500 and over \$186,000. That is a huge range in difference of cost. Councilor Dobler would like to know what the \$22,000 offered compared to \$186,000 and if the \$35,000 option was chosen for the cost savings or a difference in quality. Ms. Bliss stated that in reviewing all of them there were several factors that were looked at including relevant experience with groups our size, experience working with the public sector, included relevant examples of the work they have done with other entities, and how closely those examples might match our scope of services and what we are looking for. We also looked at if they had a diverse team of consultants and if their training approach seemed reasonable in terms of the topics covered in the sessions planned. It was also taken under consideration if their proposal was well put together, easy to understand and pricing. The proposals on the higher end, where they diverged mostly with these evaluation topics, was the training approach. If they cost a lot, they were typically proposing numerous days and numerous hours of training. We felt like we were not necessarily getting more for that proposal when we had a fairly tight scope of services. They were expanding on our scope of services and proposing more than what we were asking for. The pricing was indicative of that.

Councilor Govoni stated that he is on the Health & Safety committee and when the discussion took place about this annual training, it was also discussed that this becomes a culture of the Town of Windsor. Councilor Govoni suggested that this should be reflected in our personnel rules. When job applications are received, it will be listed there which will reinforce the culture of Windsor, and if someone does not abide by it, then that gives us a better chance of retraining them or disciplining them for not abiding by the training guidelines. Councilor Govoni also suggested that we have it on an electronic database so we can email it to Windsor employees once a year to reinforce it. Councilor Govoni is in support of this proposal.

Councilor Wilkos thanked George Slate for his communication to the Council. Mr. Slate had inquired about this subject and Councilor Wilkos agreed with a few things that Mr. Slate had brought to the Council's attention. Councilor Wilkos also appreciated Deputy Mayor McAuliffe bringing to our attention that this was brought forward to the Council after our approval of the budget process. This is not part of the current budget season. Councilor Wilkos would like to know if virtual platforms were looked at as an option so the training can be done at any given time. Councilor Wilkos stated that he has been participating in annual trainings for about twelve years. The virtual platform is incredibly effective and is probably financially responsible as well. Ms. Bliss stated that a virtual platform could be very effective as follow-up for refreshers and reminders. We have not done this type of training with the approach of inclusion to this extent that includes all the topics outlined in the scope of services. Ms. Bliss stated that the idea was having conversation as part of the initial training with a live training via Zoom. The proposals as well as the people interviewed really emphasized the learning coming from interaction and dialogue during the training. This has also been done with the sexual harassment training and it is very effective. Councilor Wilkos agreed that those type of trainings are very engaging and effective.

Councilor Rampulla Bress thanked Ms. Bliss for the thorough explanation and proposal, especially the thoughts on the interactive training as opposed to the digital training. Councilor Rampulla Bress agreed that this has not gone on in a long time. It is nice to see there is initiative following the decision to do the proclamation.

Councilor Black-Burke thanked everyone for the work that has gone into this. It is very important to take your time, which is exactly what you did while coming to this conclusion. Councilor Black-Burke appreciates the gravity that everyone is assigning to this. Especially, by starting out with in-person training. Diversity, equity, and inclusion training is something that requires dialogue so you can come to a common understanding. Councilor Black-Burke looks forward to receiving reports of what has happened, pushing on the culture that does exist in Windsor. It will be wonderful to hear what the benefit will be with these types of trainings. As a school district, there has always been ways to include diversity, equity, and inclusion discussion.

Councilor Walker followed up about the comments made earlier by Mr. Slate. He mentioned there might be some costs that are not covered in this agenda item, because there will be more people who need to attend the trainings over time. Councilor Walker stated that it would be ideal to put the actual complete cost with this training and publish that cost as part of our efforts. Councilor Walker would like to know more about this diversity training as a whole. We are representing the Town of Windsor, but we seem to be focused on town staff. Councilor Walker would like to know why we are not including the Board of Education. Sixty percent of our expenditures go to the Board of Education. When we make these bold initiatives, it is not just town staff that should be included in this. Town Manager Souza stated that with the previous superintendent, there was a brief conversation regarding the potential of working together. There needed to be more work done to figure out how we could do that. The directive was to move forward with training discussions after the superintendent's departure. There has not been significant discussion about what they are currently doing. In the past there has been a range of study circles and they are significantly ahead in terms of their efforts. Going forward we will work with the new superintendent in a cooperative fashion in terms of training.

Councilor Dobler stated that a lot of members on the Board of Education including Councilor Black-Burke and himself did go through diversity training. Councilor Dobler suggested that President Lockhart of the Board of Education address Councilor Walker's inquiry.

Leonard Lockhart stated that there has been diversity training conducted throughout the school system. Professional development for the staff was done during the opening of this school year. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is something that we take very seriously. Respectfully we thank you for wanting to include Windsor Public Schools, but Windsor Public Schools is managed by the Windsor Board of Education and not the Town Council. We are responsible for the employees and providing the trainings required. We are thankful to the Town Council for affording us the funding. We ensure that the employees are engaged in all the cultures that are in the building. We as the Board of Education are doing a great job addressing this topic in the schools.

Councilor Walker reiterated that his statements were meant to be inclusive. Councilor Walker appreciates the information given by Mr. Lockhart. It is easy to talk about something but as a

town in general, and as a reminder 60% of expenditures are on the Board of Education, and in the spirit of cooperation, it would be nice to see something in writing from the Board of Education as a part of “selling Windsor” of all the diversity training efforts that the Board of Education staff has done. Councilor Walker stated that he is sure that not everyone in town is aware of the training that is being done within the school system.

Mr. Lockhart stated that Councilor Walker’s comments are well received, and we do have representatives from the Board of Education that are appointed by President Lockhart to serve on the taskforce with the Town Council. If and when we are ready to convene those two bodies together to discuss collaborative issues of this nature, we will welcome that conversation. At that time, we will welcome one inclusive statement.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe stated it would be a great idea for the Town Council to participate in this training. It was never said that there would be no costs associated with this, but there were not any known costs at the time. This is a process where we are feeling it out and determining what is needed by the town. The resolution needs to be supported, and at the time the resolution was made, we had already set the FY 21 budget. At the same time, we realized we did not know the costs, but we did know there would be some costs, particularly in this area of training.

Councilor Govoni expressed his concerns for providing overtime pay for the training, especially in areas like the Police Department where there are three different shifts to consider. Town Manager Souza stated that there should not be much overtime at all. The police officers have already gone through the training for this cycle. Those overtime costs have been incurred. For the remainder of this fiscal year, Town Manager Souza does not foresee minimal if any overtime.

Councilor Black-Burke stated that she appreciates the discourse. Councilor Black-Burke added that diversity, equity, and inclusion training is not really “check a box” type of work. It is something that is very adaptive. We all do it and have gone through it. There have been study circles and a couple of years ago we were offered to participate in a listening session with the author of “Waking Up White.” Councilor Black-Burke reiterated that it is adaptive and will require continual participation.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

d) Approve Priority Redevelopment List

MOVED by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe, seconded by Councilor Dobler that the Priority Redevelopment Properties List as amended to include the former Roger Wolcott School property be adopted as presented.

Jim Burke, Economic Development Director, stated the Economic Development Commission reviewed the Priority Redevelopment Properties List during their regular meeting of November 18, 2020. A status report on each property was presented by staff and discussed by the Commission. A copy of the status report is attached.

Following its review, the Commission voted to recommend that the former Roger Wolcott School property be added to the Priority Redevelopment Properties List. The Commission believes that this action would support the recent Town Council discussions regarding disposition options for this property. This property also meets a number of the criteria for inclusion on the list as set out in the TIF Policy as outlined below:

- The former school is located on a heavily traveled roadway;
- there are pending opportunities related to the site as evidenced by the recent interest by educational and residential developers;
- the substantial costs to either renovate or demolish the current structure represent a major difficulty to redevelopment without assistance; and
- the Town's costs for holding the property will continue to grow over time if there is no action to redevelop.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe would like to know what the tax increment finance assistance really is. Mr. Burke stated that tax increment financing is a financing method that is used to take the growth and property tax revenue from a site after it is developed and dedicates that additional increment to helping the project get started or operate in the first place. In order to incentivize the development, at the beginning we will take a portion of new tax revenues that will come in because of development and help incentivize the project. That can take a range of forms. It can be the traditional infrastructure improvement, or a street improvement that will help development get started that would help take that burden of cost off that project. It could even go into financing some parts of the project. Under the current tax increment statute of the state, it could also take the form of a rebate. It is a flexible tool. At the time this was developed, we had a very archaic state program. Town Manager Souza stated that it is a much more flexible tool given and that the State of Connecticut is updating the statute. We also have a tax increment financing tool with Great Pond Improvement District. That is a tax increment where we share with the development district a portion of their revenues that are generated to go towards their infrastructure costs.

Councilor Rampulla Bress would like to know if the Council decided to remove 418 and 446 Windsor Avenue, how it would be done. Councilor Rampulla Bress followed up with the scenario of if it were removed from the priority redevelopment property list, would it be impacted in a negative way if something needed to be done in terms of remediation work. Councilor Rampulla Bress would like to know if this would result in us searching for grants or other types of resources if we decided for it to be a green space. Town Manager Souza addressed Councilor Rampulla Bress's first question by stating the Council can make an amendment to this list if you wanted to add or remove any of the properties. Secondly, by removing it from this list in terms of the redevelopment parcel it would negatively impact our ability to potentially compete for any future grants to either enhance or remediate if need be. Many of those grant programs are more geared toward actual development where you are gaining or adding value to your tax base. The pool of grant opportunities gets narrower if we just look at open space or neighborhood park projects.

Councilor Govoni would like to know if the area being discussed is considered two separate parcels. Town Manager Souza confirmed that they are two separate parcels and there may be multiple sites at the redevelopment parcel. Councilor Govoni stated that we can put it anywhere we want on the list, but we are not breaking up a parcel. Looking at a neighborhood park concept

is not looking at it globally. Councilor Govoni envisions that space if left open, to have a unique design. Complete Streets should be partners in this project. Partnering up with Riverfront Recapture would also be beneficial to the space. Coming together could create a nice concept.

Councilor Wilkos expressed frustration about the list. It is stagnant with the same properties and when you remove our green space, there is a single property owner sitting on 35% of our properties and it is frustrating. The concern is, even with taking off those properties that are owned by the individual, there seems to be obstacles that are preventing people from following through. Councilor Wilkos would like to know if the town is having issues with approvals or planning. Mr. Burke stated that in some of the cases it has to do with ownership changes and ownership expectations about what they should have been paid for the property. Sometimes the market gets to be just right and then a recession hits which can affect the sale of the property as well. Town Manager Souza stated that when you look back fifteen years ago, the Town Planning and Zoning commission created overlaying zoning districts for the town center and for the Wilson neighborhood which really created some flexibility to add some density in terms of residential.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe stated that he believes it is not necessary to remove the redevelopment parcel at this moment. Deputy Mayor McAuliffe likes the addition of the Wolcott property.

Councilor Jepsen would like to know about what is going on at the plaza building, and when it would be appropriate to take them off this list. Town Manager Souza believes that the plaza building can be taken off. The Economic Development Commission wanted to make sure it was visible to be able to tell the property owner and others that it is important. Councilor Jepsen stated that he is under the impression that they are repaying on the loan again. Town Manager Souza stated that they are still in the arrears. We have been trying to work an arrangement with the family. The ownership has gone through some changes due to a family situation. Mr. Burke has been working with the family to make sure they can get back on track.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

13) RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS - None

14) MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

- a) Minutes of the December 21, 2020 Public Hearing

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to approve the unapproved minutes of the December 21, 2020 Public Hearing as presented.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- b) Minutes of the December 21, 2020 Regular Town Council meeting

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

Motion Passed 9-0-0

15) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Ned Bacigalupo, said the amount of money being offered to the bands does not seem to be enough.

16) EXECUTIVE SESSION

17) ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councilor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Black-Burke to adjourn the meeting at 9:52 p.m.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth Brisebois
Clerk of the Town Council