



**TOWN COUNCIL
VIRTUAL MEETING
February 1, 2021
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 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 Rampulla Bress led the group in prayer/reflection.

3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Rampulla Bress led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4) PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS

- a) Proclamation declaring February 2021 as Black History Month

The proclamation was read by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe.

5) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Sally Grossman, 106 Niles Road, stated that she wanted to address the allegations regarding the Windsor Housing Authority (WHA) made by the residents at Millbrook Village. Ms. Grossman knows that there were several council members who attended the last WHA meeting and it is hard to explain how awful the meeting was. It was not only disappointing but also embarrassing. Ms. Grossman stated that when the chairperson had resigned, a new chairperson should have been voted on by the remaining commission members. Instead, a commissioner was appointed by the Windsor Housing Authority, even though it appears that the Windsor Housing Authority does not have the ability to do that. Ms. Grossman would like to know why this action was taken and why things were done the way they were. Also, a lawyer who was hired by the Windsor Housing Authority to address abuse allegations by Millbrook residents, was the one running the last commission meeting. Not only is it problematic that the Windsor Housing Authority hired counsel to investigate these claims without input from the commission, but it is more problematic that this lawyer was running the commission meeting. It appears that the same law firm that is now representing the Windsor Housing Authority (WHA) is also the same law firm that

represented the WHA's Executive Director in a lawsuit against her previous employer. Ms. Grossman wonders if this law firm can be free from bias. The current tenant commissioner, whose term ended last summer, called certain residents living under the WHA drug dealers and liars. A person who openly and publicly attacks people she is representing should not be qualified for the position she holds. Ms. Grossman believes that the Town Council needs to appoint a new tenant commissioner who can better serve the community. To address the Millbrook allegations, it is important that the housing commission approve an independent investigation. There are three commissioners required to vote in favor of an independent investigation and so far, there is only one commissioner who has called for such an action. It is appreciated that all the members of the Town Council have expressed their support for the Millbrook residents, but action is also required.

Nelson Sylvia, 111 Bloomfield Avenue, wanted to address the issues that are being brought up with the housing authority. Mr. Sylvia has nothing but pleasant things to say about the Executive Director of the WHA. It is important to note that she has made sure there have been changes made for certain residents. A sidewalk was fixed for a blind woman who lives there so she could walk outside safely every day. Mr. Sylvia stated that she has done nothing but a great job for the Windsor Housing Authority.

Ned Bacigalupo, 89 Farmstead Lane, wanted to follow up about the concert series. First Town Downtown is not going to work out. Mr. Bacigalupo stated he received a letter from them stating that he is not allowed to participate. He would like to try to move forward with his proposed concert idea from the previous meeting's public comment. Mr. Bacigalupo would like to work with one of the council members on this in order to get more information. Mr. Bacigalupo would also like to continue looking into the John Mason statue topic and is feeling encouraged to run for the Town Council during the next election.

6) COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilor Dobler reminded everyone to stay safe in the snowstorm and help your neighbors when you can.

Councilor Walker reminded everyone to maintain social distancing, wear masks, and wash your hands often. Councilor Walker also wanted to remind everyone of his comments made about the words that Mr. Bunk wrote in his letter. There was not a clear response for Councilor Walker's concerns. That letter was dated in December 2019 and addressed to State Representative Jane Garibay, Mayor Trinks, Town Manager Souza, and Public Health. In the January 8th article in the Journal Inquirer titled 'Rally Protests Windsor Housing Authority Tenants Treatment', the first line of the article reads, "Residents of the Millbrook Village housing complex have been frustrated with the town's housing authority for nearly two years." Councilor Walker stated that these problems have been ongoing and very little has been done. Councilor Walker is overjoyed and glad to see that something is finally going to be done. A full audit of the housing authority is necessary. Councilor Walker commented on his social media post where he condemned any statements that claimed Windsor is a racist town. Councilor Walker referenced a letter to Mr. Gutcheon, chairman of the democratic town committee in Windsor, that was sent by Mr. Robert

Mack. The statement regarding racism in the Town of Windsor was asked to be removed from the minutes. The democratic party chairman as well as the republican party chairman, holds a very powerful position in this town. If you start on the premise that Windsor is a racist town, then all your objectives may be discolored. Most people in Windsor are very caring and open to helping other people. Councilor Walker referenced instructions written by Machiavelli to a diplomat with the message, "Occasionally words must serve to avail the facts, but let this happen in such a way that no one becomes aware of it or if it should be noticed, excuses must be at hand to be produced immediately." Words from the fifteenth century ring true today. Councilor Walker stated that he respects the right to freedom of speech, and he has the right to inform Windsor residents.

Councilor Govoni reminded everyone to shovel out the fire hydrants after a snowstorm is finished and/or to at least expose the top of the hydrant. Councilor Govoni also stated that residents have been complaining about the increased costs from Comcast. A lot of the increases are due to the upgrades for unlimited internet service, because of the high demand from students and residents working from home. There was a suggestion to the town to see if a municipal internet could be an option, or just in general a way to help reduce the costs. Councilor Govoni wanted to pass that information onto the Town Manager because it is a growing concern due to COVID.

Councilor Black-Burke thanked all the speakers who participated during the public comment portion of the meeting. Councilor Black-Burke also reminded everyone to continue to follow COVID protocols. In the event that we are in the midst of a storm tonight, Windsor Sanitation put out a message stating that they will be a day behind. Construction pickup will also be running behind due to the storm. In honor of acknowledging black history month, the ACLU for the first time elected a woman of color as their president. To make this an even more special moment, that woman of color is a 1989 graduate from Windsor, Debra Archer. That is African American history up close and very personal.

Councilor Rampulla Bress thanked the participants who called during the public comment portion of the meeting. Councilor Rampulla Bress responded to Councilor Walker by stating that there was a meeting after receiving the letter he has mentioned, and the Council did handle things accordingly. The most recent concerns this year have been received and are being addressed diligently as well.

Councilor Wilkos stated he has nothing to say this evening.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe thanked the fellow councilors who have mentioned staying safe during the pandemic. It is known that Deputy Mayor McAuliffe has been involved with little league for many years and just a couple of weeks ago, Adrian Serano, forty-two years old, passed away. Please be safe out there and follow the guidelines. Deputy Mayor McAuliffe also congratulated Debra Archer for her incredible achievement.

Councilor Jepsen stated it is time to end the trucks coming up Pierson Lane.

Mayor Trinks thanked the council members, state representative Jane Garibay, and the other state delegation that has joined onboard with the housing authority issue. Thanks goes out to everyone out there making a meaningful change and dialogue with the residents. We have tried to be as open and welcoming as possible. Mayor Trinks appreciates the individuals who have joined in. To those who want to stay on the sidelines, then you will miss out on an opportunity that is not political or racial but based to make effective change in these people's lives. Mayor Trinks stated that we will make change in these people's lives because we owe it to them, they are our constituents.

7) REPORT OF APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

a) Board of Education

Leonard Lockhart, President of the Board of Education, stated that his report will be brief.

- This past Monday, January 25th, the Windsor Public Schools returned to full in-person learning at four days on a regular school schedule, and one day of distance learning for deep cleaning purposes. Families have been asked to remain with their choice of either 100% distance learning or 100% in-person learning throughout the third marking period.
- Our contact tracing efforts regarding positive cases of COVID in our schools indicated that COVID was transmitted outside the district and not within our schools. That is very important as a testament to the hard work of all the district employees. Mr. Lockhart gave a special thank you to the janitorial staff.
- As a board, we are moving forth with the public forums for financing committee meetings. We had to delay last week's meeting due to an illness going through the district office. The Board of Education will be having their meeting on Tuesday, February 2, 2021, and Thursday, February 4, 2021. There will be a follow-up meeting on February 9, 2021. All meetings will be full distanced for all participants. If it is necessary, there will be another follow-up meeting on February 11, 2021. All meetings will be fully virtual, and members of the public are encouraged to submit their comments. Town council members are also invited to participate in the meetings, especially in order to see the interim superintendent presentation of the budget. All meetings will begin at 6:00 p.m. with a maximum thirty minutes of public forum.
- The superintendent search survey is still open on the district website. There have been numerous cohorts that have been engaged throughout the district. The survey will remain available until February 12, 2021. Mr. Lockhart encourages all citizens of Windsor to participate. The Board of Education wishes to be transparent and as informative as possible.

Councilor Black-Burke stated that while she knows the choice to send students into the building is a personal choice for families, it really sparked joy in her son to be back in his element and return to school. The administrators, teachers, bus drivers, custodians, etc. should be acknowledged for going out of their way under these circumstances. Councilor Black-Burke expressed her gratitude for them.

Councilor Dobler echoed what Councilor Black-Burke said. It is nice to see the kids going back to school full-time. Councilor Dobler would like to know why Sage Park was sent home this week for virtual learning after implementing the in-person learning plans. Mr. Lockhart stated that this is a one-week episode. There was an outbreak of positive cases, the interim superintendent saw it fit to shut down the whole building because we could not responsibly staff Sage Park Middle School for the entire week.

Councilor Rampulla Bress thanked Mr. Lockhart for all that he is accomplishing, especially during these difficult times. This is a tremendous undertaking. The outreach that is happening regarding the search for the new superintendent is impressive. Councilor Rampulla Bress would like to know more about the stakeholder contact with the Council and if she needs to be involved if the survey has already been completed by council members. Mr. Lockhart stated that it was requested by him personally for the Town Council as well as the Mayor to have the opportunity to speak with the consultant. Mr. Lockhart would have to check to see what has been provided for the Town Council from Mr. Erardi, or perhaps something could be written on Mr. Lockhart's behalf by Ms. Sally Brown. Mayor Trinks stated he would be happy to accept that on behalf of the Council.

Councilor Rampulla Bress just wanted to ensure that everything will be done fairly according to proper procedure.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe thanked Mr. Lockhart for his thorough report.

Mayor Trinks thanked Mr. Lockhart for his time and report.

8) TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Residential Trash Pick-up Schedule

Due to the snow storm, the trash and recycling pickup schedule has been delayed by one day this week according to Windsor Sanitation.

Tax Relief for Senior Citizens

Applications for Elderly Homeowners tax relief are being taken in the Assessor's office and will be accepted until May 15, 2021. To be eligible for this program, you must be at least 65 years of age by December 31, 2020 or totally disabled per the Social Security regulations. You must also own and occupy your home and meet income requirements.

In addition to the state program, the town also offers a local program. All taxpayers that qualify for the state program will automatically qualify for the local program. However, if you do not qualify for the state program, you could still possibly qualify for the local program. The income limit is \$51,700 per household. For more information please contact the Assessor's office at 860-285-1817.

Town Clerk's Office Annual Marriage License Tradition Continues

In keeping with a tradition that dates back to 1963, the Town Clerk's office will issue free marriage licenses in honor of Valentine's Day. With Valentine's Day falling on a Sunday, the Town Clerk's office will issue free marriage licenses on Friday, February 12th.

New measures have been established this year to protect the health of the couples and staff members of the Town Clerk's office. Couples will need to make an appointment by Wednesday, February 10th and submit their marriage application in advance of their appointment. To keep the transaction time to a minimum, all marriage licenses will be prepared in advance of the couple's appointment.

AARP Tax Preparation Program

Staff has been attempting to line up AARP or another group to once again assist with the Senior Income Tax consulting/preparation service that is held each year at the Senior Center. Not surprisingly, AARP is having a difficult time in securing enough trained volunteers to provide the service this year. We expect to receive a final decision this week.

Vaccination Clinic Update

The Windsor Health Department and South Windsor Health Department have collaborated to offer COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics to ensure access and availability to persons living in Connecticut. COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics are offered on Tuesdays in Windsor and on Thursdays in South Windsor and are expected to continue for the next few months. Tomorrow's clinic appointments have been rescheduled to Wednesday.

The first clinics were offered the last week of December and have continued since then. To date, 10 clinics have been offered. 1,126 shots have been provided. (1,046 1st first vaccines and 80 second vaccines). Appointments for second vaccines started last week and those appointments will be offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays alongside the appointments for first vaccines. We are still constrained by vaccine availability.

Economic Development Update

Town staff has continued to work with a multi-national bio-science firm interested in investing in town. This project involves both a research and development function along with a production facility in a multi-year phased approach.

The have submitted an application for a Fixed Assessment Agreement incentive. The Economic Development Committee has met and reviewed the application and found the project to meet the Town Council's incentive policy.

I anticipate the item to be formally introduced to the Town Council later in February.

Snow Removal reminders

Please remember to clear snow from around fire hydrants near your property as well as to clean sidewalks that abut your property. Please do not push or blow snow into the public right-of-way as it may create hazardous conditions.

Thank you to all our public works employees who have worked throughout the storm starting at 3:30 AM on Monday and will be on duty through Tuesday afternoon making our roads and town facilities passable.

Councilor Rampulla Bress extended her thanks to Town Manager Souza and his team for this incredible undertaking with the vaccine. There is a lot of work going on behind the scenes to make this happen.

9) REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Town Improvements Committee – Councilor Dobler stated there is nothing to report this evening.

Special Projects Committee – Councilor Dobler stated there is nothing to report.

Health & Safety Committee – Councilor Black-Burke stated there is nothing to report this evening.

Personnel Committee – Councilor Rampulla Bress stated we will be voting tonight on people who would like to be on the various boards and commissions. The Personnel Committee will be meeting in the next week or two to continue their work.

Finance Committee – Deputy Mayor McAuliffe stated the Finance Committee met on January 25, 2021. It was a good meeting. Last year's audit was reviewed and everything was perfect. FY22 second quarter was also reviewed. There were presentations reviewed from the Caring Connection and Discovery Center. As expected they are very impacted by COVID-19. The finance director also reviewed the impact of COVID-19 on expenditures and revenues. We are generally in very good shape and the town does a great job. Deputy Mayor McAuliffe commended the director at the Caring Connection and the Discovery Center. They are dealing with a very difficult situation and they are doing the best they can.

10) ORDINANCES

11) UNFINISHED BUSINESS

12) NEW BUSINESS

a) Presentation of October 2020 Grand List Report

Town Assessor, Larry Labarbera, stated this was a positive year. The October 2020 taxable Grand List is \$3,212,253,000. This is an increase of \$58,400,000 or 1.85% compared to last year. Real property increased primarily due to new tax abatements and the various ongoing new construction projects. Personal property increased slightly with some large investments to offset the regular depreciation. The Motor Vehicle Grand List increased compared to 2019 despite having less vehicles. The real estate portion went up 1.8% which is a total of \$2,487,000,000. This was primarily due to new construction. The reduction of the tax agreements on the Amazon

warehouse and the old Windsor apartments also contributed to the increase. As for personal property, it is a total of \$498,516,000, which is an increase of 1.54%. There are 1,258 accounts down from last year's 1,272. The top fifty accounts are the top fifty taxpayers that comprised 83% of total Personal Property Grand List. The Motor Vehicle portion of the Grand List is about \$230,000,000 which is an increase of 2.59%, our largest increase by percentage. This information is provided by the Connecticut DMV. There are 26,280 vehicles registered down from last year's 27,520. The decrease in the number of vehicles is partially due to the delayed registrations as a result of the governor's executive orders. The increased assessment is also due to revised NADA pricing guidelines and an increase of newer vehicles that are on our Grand List.

Councilor Dobler would like to know more regarding the motor vehicles. There was an increase of just about \$6.5 million or just under 3%, yet there were less registered motor vehicles. Most motor vehicles are a depreciating asset. This is a large increase. Councilor Dobler would like to know if more people purchased newer cars and what the reason is that the number increased so much. Mr. Labarbera stated that 50% of our Grand List is cars that were manufactured between 2012 and 2020. Half of our Grand List is newer cars. So those hold their value a little bit more. Looking at the NADA pricing, they have reflected some of the changes in used car values for this year. People are not buying new cars they are just not being produced; therefore, the value of a used car has gone up and stayed up.

Councilor Jepsen stated that a couple of things jumped out at him. The first being personal property, to which he was not familiar with what DGI Menard is. That is a one time thing and is going to be gone next year. It has to do with some equipment that was used in the construction of Amazon. Mr. Labarbera stated that something like this has been present every year, for example at the Verizon facility. This year it is larger because the Amazon project is larger. We do get that every so often depending on the projects. If a project is here as of October 1st, it is assessed. Councilor Jepsen stated that what he does not understand is the construction will be gone next year and did not realize that we were able to tax that. Town Manager Souza stated that for this year they do not usually meet the top ten notable changes. Councilor Jepsen would also like to know if on the real estate portion if the three reductions of supreme court assessment appeals have been finished. Mr. Labarbera stated that we finished those and they were approved by the Council. Town Manager Souza stated that we do still have a few remaining appeals that are still working their way through the superior court process. Mr. Labarbera stated that the appeals are still working their way through the superior court and most of those have been delayed. We have not had a pretrial since last June.

Town Manager Souza stated this is good news and provides the Council with more flexibility as we move into the budget discussions. This shows that Windsor is still in a good place for both the small businesses and the large businesses to invest.

b) Approve amendments to Recreation Department job descriptions

MOVED by Councilor Dobler, seconded by Councilor Jepsen that the position descriptions for Senior Center Activities Specialist, Senior Center Coordinator and Transportation Coordinator

be approved as presented and the position of Senior Center Activities Specialist be placed in Pay Grade V of the Part Time and Seasonal Pay Plan.

Amelia Bliss provided job descriptions for the following positions:

Senior Activities Specialist

The Senior Activities Specialist's primary duties are to assist the Coordinator in the research, development, and implementation of activities for seniors, publicize and market various activities and programs, and to maintain program records. Some of these duties were being performed by the previous Clerical Assistant. The proposed changes are intended to detail the duties of the position more accurately and ensure education and experience needs are contemporary.

Senior Center Coordinator

The main duties of the Senior Center Coordinator are to develop, organize, supervise and direct the services and activities for senior residents and manage the Senior Center and transportation program.

Transportation Coordinator

The main duties of the Transportation Coordinator are to manage the day-to-day operations of transportation services for seniors and disabled residents, including patrons of the Caring Connection and the Senior Center.

Councilor Black-Burke would like to know what the rationale is for moving the positions from under the Human Services department to just Recreation and Leisure services as it relates to these jobs. Town Manager Souza stated that roughly a year ago, the Human Services Coordinator was Ann Wakelin. After Ms. Wakelin retired, we reorganized the departments to provide more supervision and a better alignment in our perspective. This was incorporated with the financial services within the budget for 2021. Senior Services is doing a lot of programming. They would have a strategic alignment with the recreation department. It also allowed for some improved efficiencies in terms of the registration process. Ms. Bliss added that Ann Wakelin was working part-time as a Human Services Director, and this shift allowed them to be supervised by a full-time director.

Councilor Black-Burke would like to know if the Senior Services Coordinator is teaming with anyone to ensure that programs are going to be developed which serves the social services needs for our seniors. Councilor Black-Burke stated she thinks the question was answered, explaining that it just better aligns for the work that needs to be done. Town Manager Souza stated that he apologizes for not including that in his first response. We still have a very active Social Services in the Human Services division. They team up regularly with the senior center staff in terms of the case management on an individual household basis. The four positions work together on case management.

Councilor Rampulla Bress stated that she noticed from the job description there was a strike of the ethics clause in each one. Councilor Rampulla Bress would like to know the reason for that. It also seems that the supervisory duties were removed, and it can be assumed that there was the reorganization so there could be someone else taking on those duties. Ms. Bliss stated that

the ethics and a couple of other competencies were added, but what is confusing is the colors of the edits are different in each job description. The only change to the supervisory portion is eliminating it from having its own section.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- c) Appropriation of \$395,000 from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance for the town facilities for the town facilities FY21 LED Lighting project

MOVED by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe, seconded by Councilor Jepsen that \$395,000 be appropriated from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance to fund the town facilities FY 2021 lighting project.

Bob Jarvis, Town Engineer/Director of Public Works stated staff is respectfully requesting the Town Council consider funding the upgrade of older, inefficient lighting at nine town facilities to reduce energy consumption and costs. These conversion projects are eligible for rebates under an energy efficiency program totalling approximately \$118,000. Eversource has stated the incentive program is set to close prior to this spring. Therefore, Council approval is being sought at this time.

Councilor Wilkos stated that he was surprised to see a couple of the projects on the list. There are panels on one of the buildings already and Councilor Wilkos is surprised that had not already been done. The lighting is usually taken care of at the time of installation. Councilor Wilkos was also surprised at the amount of reduction at 55%. It seems that it should be higher if we are taking out fixtures. Generally, these new LED's and conversion systems save upwards of 80-90%. Mr. Jarvis stated that those were the figures given by the consultant that is acting as our liaison to Eversource. Councilor Wilkos stated that he is just making some observations. Town Manager Souza stated that we can inquire with the consultant in terms of the energy savings. Some of these facilities have been worked on in the past, so some of the fixtures may not be as old as anticipated.

Councilor Jepsen is in support of this project but has some concerns about taking money out of the General Fund. Councilor Jepsen would like to know where we are in the General Fund. Town Manager Souza stated that this is a project with a larger dollar request. In the past, we have used our Capital Projects fund. We have done a fair amount out of our Capital Projects Fund so far this fiscal year, so in terms of using this, when we net out roughly \$120,000 in terms of the incentive rebate, we'll be looking at just under a \$285,000 reduction or use of the fund balance. In FY21, the Council approved approximately \$55,000 in projects, including the railroad quiet zone study. The Council also took action at the previous meeting regarding the relocation of the statue. We have returned \$99,000 to the General Fund from a previous LED conversion project at Sage Park. There has been a net gain of about \$40,000. After this approval, we would remain just below 23% as a percent of the current year's balance.

Councilor Dobler thanked Bob Jarvis and Town Manager Souza for putting this together. Councilor Dobler loves when we can upgrade infrastructure and do it in a way that people can see the benefit. The savings will be twenty-two homes' worth of energy use for one year.

Town Manager Souza extended his thanks to Whit Przech and Gary Dogewicz for putting this together.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- d) Introduce a bond ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$240,000 FOR COST IN CONNECTION WITH PAVEMENT RESURFACING AT VARIOUS TOWN FACILITIES AND SCHOOLS; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$240,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION."

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe, that the reading into the minutes of the text of the ordinance entitled, 'AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$240,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH PAVEMENT RESURFACING AT VARIOUS TOWN FACILITIES AND SCHOOLS; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$240,000 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 \$240,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH PAVEMENT RESURFACING AT VARIOUS TOWN FACILITIES AND SCHOOLS; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$240,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION."

Town Manager Souza and Bob Jarvis provided an overview of this request.

The proposed pavement rehabilitation work will be similar to one of the rehabilitation methods done as part of the annual pavement management program. At this time, we propose the milling and paving of 2" of existing bituminous concrete pavement. Proposed paving activities will occur within the existing curb lines and limits of pavement.

Prior to paving operations, we will make any necessary drainage improvements. The project may also include the replacement of deteriorated curbs and sidewalks at the facilities.

Improvements are proposed at the LP Wilson Community Center, Wilson Fire House, Windsor High School and Poquonock Fire House, as funding permits.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- e) Set a public hearing for February 16, 2021 at 7:20 p.m. for a bond ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$240,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH PAVEMENT RESURFACING AT VARIOUS TOWN FACILITIES AND SCHOOLS; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$240,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION."

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Councilor Dobler that a Public Hearing be held at the Windsor Town Hall on February 16, 2021, at 7:20 PM (prevailing local time) on the following ordinance entitled, 'AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$240,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH PAVEMENT RESURFACING AT VARIOUS TOWN FACILITIES AND SCHOOLS; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$240,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION' and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk is authorized and directed to post and publish notice of said Public Hearing.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- f) Set a public hearing for February 16, 2021 at 7:20 p.m. on the possible lease or sale of town owned property at 451 Windsor Avenue

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe that a Public Hearing, per Section 7-163e of the *Connecticut General Statutes*, be set for Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at 7:20 PM to solicit public comment on the possible sale or lease of town-controlled real property, the former Roger Wolcott School at 451 Windsor Avenue.

Town Manager Souza stated that this item could be acted on at this point.

Town Manager Souza stated that over the course of the past several years, there has been discussions concerning the possible reuse or redevelopment of the former Wolcott School at 451 Windsor Avenue. In November 2020, the Town Council directed staff to pursue the option of the potential lease or transfer of the building for educational use.

If the Town Council were to pursue a sale of the property, a Special Town Meeting would need to be held to approve a sale. If a lease arrangement were to be pursued, Town Council approval of a lease would be needed.

Presently the building is partially occupied by Team Paragon, a community-based youth program. Team Paragon utilizes the cafeteria, stage and gymnasium areas for their meeting and activities. The majority of the building, including the former classrooms and administrative offices, have been vacant since the school district stopped utilizing the building for education purposes. Town staff is evaluating possible options to relocate Team Paragon, if needed.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

13) RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

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

- APPOINT Taariq Jaamal as an Unaffiliated member to the Windsor Housing Authority for a five-year term to expire July 31, 2025 or until a successor is appointed.
- APPOINT Sherwin LeGendre as a Democratic Alternate member to the Conservation Commission for a five year term to expire November 30, 2025 or until a successor is appointed.
- APPOINT Jamie Hodgson as an Unaffiliated Alternate member to the Human Relations Commission for three year term to expire May 31, 2021 or until a successor is appointed.
- REAPPOINT Marsha Brown as an Unaffiliated member to the Commission on Aging & Persons with Disabilities for a three-year term to expire November 8, 2023 or until a successor is appointed.
- REAPPOINT Charles Jackson as a Republican member to the Wilson/Deerfield Advisory Committee for a three year term to expire April 30, 2023 or until a successor is appointed.

Councilor Walker would like to discuss this agenda item. For the vote on appointing Jamie Hodgson to the Human Relations Commission, Councilor Walker voted “no”. Ms. Hodgson was slated to fill a full member slot on that commission by the Personnel Committee. Councilor Walker voted “no” on that as well. That was a slot assigned for a republican member. She subsequently was appointed into a republican member slot as an alternate.

Councilor Walker raised a question from the *Town Charter* Section 5-1, subsection (d) which states, “In appointing boards and commissions, the council shall not appoint more than a bare majority of any one party on any board.” Councilor Walker raised the question to give the Town Council leeway in the event that there is a candidate that they need to appoint that is an unaffiliated person. That should be the exception and not the norm. Councilor Walker referred to another portion of the *Charter* that states the approval of appointing this person would go against what has been written. There is only one sitting republican on that board. Currently the democratic slots are filled with democrats, but the republican slots are fill with unaffiliated and with Jamie coming on board, that would make her an alternate republican. Mayor Trinks would like to know if Councilor Walker has documentation on this allegation. Councilor Walker explained the voting process for this particular slot opening. Councilor Walker opposed and Jamie Hodgson is still being presented as unaffiliated to fill a republican slot. Councilor Walker would like to know if Jamie Hodgson is registered as an unaffiliated voter in the Town of Windsor.

Councilor Rampulla Bress stated that the Personnel Committee goes by the application and the application that was submitted by Ms. Hodgson identified herself as an unaffiliated member. Councilor Rampulla Bress would guess that Councilor Walker would have to check with the town registrar, but the Personnel Committee takes our candidates at their word and interviews candidates, especially republican candidates, for republican spots when they are available. Unfortunately, there has not been an available person and we do not hold open spots so that town business cannot be conducted in order to wait for a republican application. Those positions being filled have been decided upon by the three members of the Personnel Committee in a fair and unbiased fashion.

Councilor Walker stated that at the Personnel Committee meeting, the Chair mentioned that she is very familiar with Ms. Hodgson and really wanted to get this person on the board.

Councilor Rampulla Bress stated that she is being misquoted and does not know Ms. Hodgson from a hole in the wall. She did have a wonderful interview, but Councilor Rampulla Bress is not familiar with Ms. Hodgson personally.

Councilor Walker stated that he heard the presentation of Ms. Hodgson and hopes that there is a recording of this meeting, because Councilor Rampulla Bress did not give the impression that she did not know Ms. Hodgson. It is public knowledge that Ms. Hodgson is a registered democrat. The registrars in town have confirmed this information.

Councilor Black-Burke stated that when she came to the Council in 2018, she was a part of the Personnel Committee and at the time it was being led by Mr. O'Reilly. The same process that Councilor Black-Burke came into has been followed to this point. If there is something that all nine councilors are aware of that is not being done, it is the responsibility of all nine to address this issue. On several occasions, we have been faced with the statement that information has not been shared. Councilor Black-Burke explained that she sat in the Personnel Committee meeting with Councilor Walker and Councilor Rampulla Bress. If for any reason any one of them had the information that was just put forth, that should have been stated in that meeting and should have been shared with the Council before the vote in today's meeting. Councilor Black-Burke is disheartened that we are here voting on a citizen and that information was not given to the Personnel Committee or to the Council. Councilor Black-Burke stated that when she speaks to people around town about coming onto a board or commission, she states that it is acceptable to be democrat, republican, or unaffiliated. We cannot deter people from wanting to serve their community, simply based on their party.

Councilor Rampulla Bress shared her disappointment, because she feels that this committee has been very out in the open and has followed all procedures that have been given. When Councilor Walker expressed his concern, it was based off of his feeling that there were not enough republicans on that committee. Out of deference to that concern, we decided to place this candidate in an alternate spot in order to leave a position open for a republican who might apply. The Personnel Committee did do research as to whether unaffiliated members could be put in that position. This conversation could have been taken care of before this public meeting.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe stated that the Personnel Committee has done a great job filling the vacancies on these committees. Deputy Mayor McAuliffe would like to know if there was a republican candidate available for this opening who was not chosen. Councilor Rampulla Bress responded that there unfortunately was not a republican candidate.

Councilor Walker stated the Personnel Committee has a liaison who is tasked with checking and monitoring commission member placements with each vacancy. Councilor Walker stated that he has no prior knowledge that Ms. Hodgson was a democrat. Councilor Walker stated that his simple research could have been done elsewhere. Councilor Walker would like to review the minute videos to understand and better educate himself about how Ms. Hodgson was presented.

Councilor Walker reviewed a statute about minority representation. If there are four alternates and the rest are democrats, then the republican party is not being given a voice.

Councilor Rampulla Bress is offended that she is being referred to as a liar. Any time applications are received from republicans, they are well received. There have been many appropriate arrangements to oversee what is available for applicants. Every council member is always made aware of the vacancies as well. The honest solution to this problem is not to change the charter or have the liaison investigate people, but to have a wealth of republicans come forward and put their names in.

Councilor Walker would like the record to be that he did not call Councilor Rampulla Bress a liar. Councilor Walker would like to review the video of the meeting so he can refresh his memory.

Mayor Trinks stated that it did seem like Councilor Walker was stating Councilor Rampulla Bress was lying about knowing Ms. Hodgson. Mayor Trinks stated that we can either take Ms. Hodgson's application out for consideration or we can move forward and hold off her swearing in until we can confirm that she is not a democrat.

Councilor Rampulla Bress stated that she has no difficulty if Councilor Walker has different information. Councilor Rampulla Bress also does not have difficulty placing this appointment to the side. It is important, however, to move forward with the rest of the candidates.

Councilor Jepsen stated that he sees no reason to stop going forward with this. Having been on the Personnel Committee when it started and having written many of the rules, we have made mistakes before. This should not be this big of a deal. It seems that at this point we are being unfair to Ms. Hodgson and we should move forward. If it turns out that someone is off sides, we can fix it later.

Councilor Jepsen would like clarification on Taariq Jaamal's appointment. He feels there might be some confusion. He'd like to confirm that Taariq is taking Dell Rondinone's spot and she is now off the housing authority by this action. Councilor Rampulla Bress confirmed that Dell Rondinone was not notified that she had been reappointed as there was another applicant interested in that position and he has been put forward for the Council's review tonight.

Motion Passed 8-1-0 (Councilor Walker against)

14) MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

- a) Minutes of the January 19, 2021 Public Hearing

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Councilor Dobler to approve the unapproved minutes of the January 19, 2021 Public Hearing meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

b) Minutes of the January 19, 2021 Regular Town Council meeting

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Councilor Dobler to approve the unapproved minutes of the January 19, 2021 Regular Town Council meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

15) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Eric Weiner, 76 Palisado Avenue, stated that he is surprised that he feels the need to make any comment this evening, but Councilor Walker began his diatribe by referring to some items from the *Connecticut General Statutes* and the *Town Charter*. Mr. Weiner stated that he is very familiar with the sections that he refers to. There is an interesting dynamic going on in Windsor. Currently for the registered voters in Windsor, democrats outnumber republicans by a three to one margin. Naturally, there would be more democrats in town wishing to serve on town commissions, on the Board of Education, or on the Town Council. It is very clear that the *Charter* says nothing more than a bare majority for commissions, the board, and the council itself. *Connecticut General Statutes* has a discussion about minority representation and under *Connecticut General Statutes* it would be possible for Windsor, with a modification of our *Charter*, to allow six to three representation majority versus minority. As the demographics of Windsor keep changing, this issue is going to come up.

Ned Bacigalupo, 89 Farmstead Lane, spoke about what Mr. Weiner spoke on. Mr. Bacigalupo stated that the democrats have been in control of Windsor since 1989 and are wholly responsible with everything that has gone wrong with this town. Mr. Bacigalupo believes that the Council is trying to disenfranchise voters. Windsor has a lot of older voters in town. There are many people who have left Windsor because of the democratic policies put forward.

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to enter Executive Session at 9:33 p.m. for the purpose of:

- a) Discussion of the selection of a site or a lease, sale or purchase of real estate (451 Windsor Avenue)

Motion Passed 9-0-0

16) EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

Staff: Peter Souza, Town Manager; Scott Colby, Assistant Town Manager

Councilor Walker left Executive Session at 9:50 p.m.

MOVED by Councilor Wilkos, seconded by Councilor Rampulla Bress to exit Executive Session and re-enter the Regular Town Council meeting at 10:11 p.m.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Walker absent)

17) ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councilor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Wilkos to adjourn the meeting at 10:11 p.m.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Walker absent)

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth Brisebois
Clerk of the Town Council