



**TOWN COUNCIL
VIRTUAL MEETING
May 3, 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 Donald Jepsen, Councilor Lenworth Walker and Councilor Kenneth Wilkos

Absent: Councilor James Govoni.

2) PRAYER OR REFLECTION

Councilor Jepsen led the group in prayer/reflection.

3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Jepsen led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4) PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS

- a) Proclamation designating May 2021 as Older Americans Month

Councilor Dobler read the proclamation designating May 2021 as Older Americans Month.

- b) Proclamation designating May 2021 as Lyme Disease Awareness Month

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe read the proclamation recognizing May 2021 as Lyme Disease Awareness Month.

5) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Sarah Faulkner, President of the Hartford Audubon Society Inc. spoke about a wetlands violation on the corner of Kennedy Road and Canterbury Lane on their Tobacco Valley nature preserve. Ms. Faulkner stated that she sent the Town Council a letter regarding the very serious property violation and trespassing violation from a new resident who lives at 220 Kennedy Road. The resident cleared out a large section of marsh, approximately 1.2 acres of the marsh. Ms. Faulkner said that she is disappointed with the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission (IWWC) because the matter is on the agenda but no contact had taken place with the Hartford Audubon Society. Ms. Faulkner stated that she met with Chloe Thompson, Environmental

Planner and Todd Sealy, Assistant Town Planner at the property on Thursday, April 29th. She requested a cease and desist order for the third time. She hoped that the IWWC would discuss this and take action. Ms. Faulkner said that she is looking for the Council's support on getting the clearing repaired, which the Hartford Audubon Society Inc. is asking for damages and restoration.

Susan Miller, 130 Palisado Avenue, spoke in support of the creation of an Arts Commission in town. Ms. Miller shared an example of art she had experienced in Montpelier, Vermont, where all around the town in every window of every store there had been multiple poems displayed. Poetry invokes so much emotion and makes you feel connected to the town. An Arts Commission can bring an emotional connection for people visiting and living in town.

Mohan Sachdev, 960 Kennedy Road, spoke in support of the performing arts. Mr. Sachdev is the President of The Windsor Arts Center, where he operates an inclusive and open gallery. He is very proud to work with the Town Manager and the Town of Windsor to bring wonderful art to the town. Mr. Sachdev appreciated any help that the Arts Commission could provide.

Ned Bacigalupo, 89 Farmstead Lane, spoke of an email he sent the Town Council about a Windsor Music Commission. Mr. Bacigalupo said that there is an agenda item for the democrats to establish an Arts Commission. There is already an Arts Center and he asked who pays for that. Mr. Bacigalupo's idea was to apply for state and federal funding to bring music events to Windsor. He had heard stories about the way musicians were treated by the Arts Center and he believed that music shouldn't be involved with it. Mr. Bacigalupo expressed his concern to have the music done with a separate commission. He said that First Town Downtown is receiving money from our tax dollars and nothing is being disclosed from them. The Windsor Historical Society is hiring two new people and the way it was advertised, it stated basically that white people need not apply. Mr. Bacigalupo said that he did submit and apply for a position on a town board and did not see it on the agenda. He feels that the Council does not want Republicans to function on town boards. He said that there should be no new taxes and the town is taxing the seniors out of their homes.

6) COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilor Dobler thanked everyone that spoke tonight. It's very important to hear all different opinions from our town folks. On May 19th, our process to normalcy from this pandemic takes a big step, but he is asking that everyone still stay vigilant and be careful. Councilor Dobler thanked all the fellow Councilors for their very civilized and productive budget process.

Councilor Walker spoke of everyone staying safe and to support the businesses in town. Councilor Walker spoke about a letter that was delivered to the Town Council from the Windsor Housing Authority. The letter stated that the Director of the Windsor Housing Authority was called a nasty name. He said that the Council wanted whatever problems at the Windsor Housing Authority to be corrected. He felt that we needed to still maintain stability and have respect for people. Councilor Walker stated that it is not okay to refer to anyone as the "N" word or any names at all. Councilor Walker asked that the Director not be referred to in that way. It is morally and ethically wrong.

Councilor Black-Burke thanked all of the public for sharing their thoughts and concerns. Councilor Black-Burke quoted James Baldwin that says, "I imagine one of the reasons people cling to hate so stubbornly is because they sense once hate is gone, they will be forced to deal with pain." Councilor Black-Burke stated that over the last week in town, the Council was notified that nooses were hung in a facility being built here in town. Symbols of hate cannot and will not be tolerated here. Councilor Black-Burke felt it evoked so many things for so many people. She said that those who are dealing with hate on some level need to find another way to deal with it. She would not stand for putting these symbols of hate on display. As a town we have to denounce that and she hoped that others would join her to denounce hate. Councilor Black-Burke stated that Councilor Rampulla Bress joined her and the Connecticut Commission on the Martin Luther King holiday ceremony called 'From Lost to Light'. She thanked Councilor Rampulla Bress for representing the Mayor who was unable to attend. She represented our town well. Councilor Black-Burke said that tomorrow, Tuesday, May 4th at 6:30 p.m., there would be a virtual Community Budget Forum presented by the Windsor CT Votes League of Women Voters. On May 5th at 6:30 p.m., State Representative Jane Garibay will be hosting a forum on Truck, Traffic and Trash with Representative Gibson, Representative McGee, and fellow Town Councilors. There will be a Vaccine Clinic on May 7th at Hopewell Baptist Church, 280 Windsor Avenue. Interested individuals can pre-register at (860) 555-7500 option '0' or feel free to stop by and they can assist you from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Councilor Rampulla Bress thanked Councilor Black-Burke and Councilor Walker for addressing the issue of hate. Councilor Rampulla Bress said that she stands in solidarity with them. It's very sad to hear all the information and especially recently with the nooses. She thinks it's important to address it as a Council and said that hate is not welcome here. Councilor Rampulla Bress said that there are several different groups of people being honored this month: Asian Pacific Heritage month, Haitian Heritage month and Jewish American Heritage month. Please celebrate our community, the people and the cultures this month.

Councilor Wilkos said that he had nothing to report this evening.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe spoke of the symbols of hate at the Amazon Distribution Center. If anyone has read or seen what has happened there, they should be outraged. Deputy Mayor McAuliffe thanked everyone who spoke tonight. The wetlands destruction is a very important matter and he will follow up on it. On May 11th, the budget referendum is happening and there is a forum on May 4th to learn more about the budget. Windsor offers excellent services at a very reasonable tax rate. Please make yourself knowledgeable and vote on May 11th.

Councilor Jepsen spoke about the budget and the spending increase which is almost 3%. It's a very low budget. Councilor Jepsen said that he is appalled about the nooses at Amazon. He wondered if Amazon had used local labor sources, would it not have happened, and also would it have helped the local economy more. Regarding the Hartford Audubon Society Inc. wetlands violation, it is very important. The water table is higher there and is there more marsh than before.

Mayor Trinks agreed with the denouncing of hate. Connecticut is starting to open up. Keep an eye out for all the things that are offered for you to participate in. Enjoy everything that spring has to offer us.

7) REPORT OF APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

a) Board of Education

A hard copy of the report was distributed to all councilors prior to the meeting.

President Leonard Lockhart stated that:

- Windsor Public Schools will have a digital billboard going up on I-91 beginning May 3. This billboard will feature our work with the NASA Hunch program. Interesting to note, the Lamar Company is based here in Windsor and the staff member helping us with the billboard and design, Mrs. Spear, is the parent of one of the students who worked on the NASA Hunch tape dispenser.
- The Windsor High School Class of 2021 Commencement will take place on Monday, June 14 (rain date is Wednesday, June 16) at the Jack O'Brien Stadium at 5:45 PM. Town Council members will receive additional information regarding graduation and other year end events via the Windsor High School principal's office. The last day of school for students will be Tuesday, June 15. The last day for teachers will be Wednesday, June 16.
- The Board of Education, through a proclamation at its April 20 meeting, declared its appreciation to the district's teaching staff and proclaimed the week of May 3 - May 7 as Windsor Teacher Appreciation Week. The Board will host a special breakfast for teachers and staff at each school location throughout the first two weeks of May. We hope Town Council members and members of the community will reach out to a teacher(s) and express their appreciation for their dedication to the students of Windsor Public Schools.

Councilor Black-Burke thanked Mr. Lockhart for the report and thanked all the teachers for their work. Councilor Black-Burke asked about the summer 2021 enrichment opportunities. Mr. Lockhart stated that as of right now, the school district is reaching out to parents for feedback. There is still discussion going on, but there will definitely be literacy and math, also recovery and acceleration for the children. Mr. Lockhart said that he would have more details in his next report for June. Mr. Lockhart said that a request for participation went out to parents weeks ago.

Councilor Jepsen asked about the new state law about religious exemptions for vaccinations and how that will impact school. Mr. Lockhart said that there is no comment right now since it's very new and he needs to speak with the school.

Mayor Trinks said that he is looking forward to graduation at the Jack O'Brien Field. Mayor Trinks stated that Councilor Black-Burke, Deputy Mayor McAuliffe and he are graduates of Windsor High School. Mr. Lockhart said that he is praying for good blessings for graduation day.

b) Economic Development Commission

A hard copy of the report was distributed to all councilors prior to the meeting.

c) Board of Assessment Appeals

A hard copy of the report was distributed to all councilors prior to the meeting.

8) TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Virtual Community Budget Forum

The League of Women Voters and CT Votes are sponsoring a virtual community budget information forum beginning at 6:30 PM on Tuesday, May 4th. Dr. Hill and I will be providing a brief overview of the budget that will be going before the voters at the May 11th referendum. Residents are welcome to participate in the forum with their questions via the Zoom link available on the town website. The forum will also be broadcast live on WGTV.

Budget Referendum

The budget referendum will be held on Tuesday, May 11th from 6:00 AM – 8:00 PM at the various polling locations. Absentee ballots can be obtained via various methods including mail and in-person at the Town Clerk's Office.

For more information please go to the town's website at:

<https://townofwindsorct.com/townclerk/elections/>

Street Paving Schedule

The first phase of street milling and overlay is expected to begin the week of May 17 and continue through the first week of June. Contractors will be working on Matthew Lane, Pepperbush Way Upton Street, Rodney Street, Drake Street, Dexter Street, Bristol Street, and East Barber Street to the railroad crossing. In addition Wilson Fire House will be partially re-paved as part of this phase of milling and paving. Motorists should expect some delays in these area and use alternate routes if possible.

Win Wag Photo Contest Begins May 7th

To help promote annual dog licensing efforts the annual Win Wag Photo Contest begins May 7th. The photo contest is free and open to Windsor residents. The entry period for the contest begins at May 7th and ends at noon on May 20th. The winning entry, determined by online public voting, will be awarded with the #1 dog license tag for the current year and a PETCO gift card. See contest details on the town's website at townofwindsorct.com.

Tobacco Sheds off of Kennedy Road

OJ Thrall, Inc. is moving two tobacco sheds currently in the field to the east of Kennedy Road at River Street. They will be moving the sheds to the west side of Kennedy Road to where the farm operations and former dormitories are located. One shed was moved this past Saturday and the other shed is scheduled to be moved this coming Saturday, May 8th beginning at 8:00 AM.

Kennedy Road will be shut down just north of River Street and south of Hayden Station Road for roughly an hour or so. Kennedy Road traffic will be detoured to use River St and Hayden Station and back onto Kennedy. Police officers will be on site helping with traffic control.

MDC Hydrant Flushing

The MDC hydrant flushing is scheduled for Windsor from May 3 through June 18. flushing helps maintain water quality and ensures hydrants are in good working condition for fire protection. See link for more information, schedule and maps.

<https://themdc.org/wa/hydrant-flushing/>

There's a lot to do in Windsor

The summer edition of *There's a lot to do in Windsor* is currently available on the town's website and will be delivered to Windsor households and businesses the week of May 10th together with the *Courant Community* newspaper. This edition includes information on programs and activities for the months of June through August.

COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics

46% of age eligible town residents have been fully vaccinated as of the end of April. This is slightly below the statewide percentage.

On Friday, May 7th Charter Oak Health Center is conducting a clinic at Hopewell Baptist Church, 280 Windsor Avenue from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. No registration is required.

Public Service Recognition Week

May 2-8, 2021 has been designated as Public Service Recognition Week, honoring federal, state, and local government employees.

I would like to recognize the efforts of our approximately 190 full-time town employees plus the dozens of part-time employees whose work throughout the year helped to support the business community, provide public safety, protect our environment, maintain our buildings, parks and roadways, preserve our history and provide programs and services for residents young and old.

This past year has been challenging to say the least, and I want to recognize the tireless efforts of our health department staff and all employees. Town of Windsor employees always are, and will continue to be on the front lines, providing essential services to the residents of Windsor. I thank them for their dedication, and it is my sincere pleasure to work with them each and every day.

Councilor Rampulla Bress thanked the Town Manager and town staff for all the work that is being done with vaccinations. Councilor Rampulla Bress stated that on the Town's Facebook page if you click on the Town of Windsor, there is constant information there. She thanked the Town employees for their exemplary service and they really make Windsor a great place to live.

Councilor Black-Burke thanked Town Manager Souza and the town staff. Councilor Black-Burke asked about the Hartford Foundation Grant, if it was part of the COVID Community Development Grants or another grant. Town Manager stated that he believed it is the COVID Community

Development Grant that is geared for community outreach and to support the clinic in the community.

9) REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Town Improvements Committee – Councilor Dobler said that the Committee will plan on meeting in the next few weeks.

Special Projects Committee – Councilor Dobler had nothing to report.

Health & Safety Committee – Councilor Black-Burke said just a reminded the audience about the forum on Thursday, May 6th and to check the State Representative’s page. Councilor Black-Burke said that the Committee would be having a meeting very soon.

Personnel Committee – Councilor Rampulla Bress said that the Committee will be meeting on, Thursday, May 13th to interview applicants. Unfortunately the April meeting was rescheduled until May. The Personnel Committee does not block any members from applying. Councilor Rampulla Bress explained the process on how the Committee works. There is a wait until we have enough applicants to schedule a meeting to interview. Everyone gets an interview.

Finance Committee – Deputy Mayor McAuliffe had nothing to report.

10) ORDINANCES

11) UNFINISHED BUSINESS

12) NEW BUSINESS

- a) Set a Public Hearing for June 7, 2021 at 7:20 p.m. (prevailing time) to solicit public comment on applications for participation in the Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA) Tax Credit program

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe that a Public Hearing be set for June 7, 2021 at 7:20 p.m. to allow for public comment on applications submitted for the Neighborhood Assistance Act Tax Credit program administered by the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services.

Town Manager Souza stated that town staff is soliciting applications from NAA-eligible organizations by way of direct email and press releases. Projects for the 2021 application round must be submitted to the Office of Community Development by close of business on May 27, 2021. Applications must be approved by the governing body of the town after conducting a public hearing. Therefore, staff is requesting that a public hearing be set for the evening of June 7, 2021 and that the list of submitted and eligible applicants be placed on the Council agenda for consideration at that time. Approved applications will then be submitted to the Department of Revenue Services by July 1, 2021.

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

b) Discussion of Arts Commission

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe requested that this item be placed onto the agenda.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe said that a while ago, as a Council, there was discussion regarding the possibility of having a poet laureate, which was proposed by the Human Relations Commission.

Councilor Rampulla Bress stated that she is very excited about the idea. She feels anytime we add more art to Windsor we add a sense of community. There are a lot of artists that live in our community. It's really important and would bring a sense of community to the town. It also fosters a sense of pride, a sense of belonging and brings about more arts in our town which brings an economic benefit. You would see an increase in property values, growth, and cultural tourism. Councilor Rampulla Bress stated that West Hartford did their bus shelter paintings. A lot of towns have added Arts Commissions because of all the benefits it brings to their towns. Councilor Rampulla Bress said she strongly supports this.

Councilor Dobler said that in the fall there were a multitude of very heated discussions, one of which was the library mural. Councilor Jepsen voted with the majority of the democrats in favor of the mural, while he voted with the majority of the republicans against it. He felt that the other councilors who were against it were very much in favor of the mural itself. What they did not like was there was no process for such a thing. There is not a process to address this and that is why we need an Arts Commission. That is the reason why he is in favor of an Arts Commission, to create a process. It would be something that is very rewarding for the town.

Councilor Jepsen stated that he is a supporter of the arts. Many years ago there was a discussion that realized there were many existing arts groups in town that could really use financial support at the time. A fund of money was administered that year which was very effective and a number of events were held. Councilor Jepsen said that he did vote for the mural because it was the right thing to do at the right time. Councilor Jepsen felt that censorship in the arts has a long history of being problematic. There is concern that the Arts Commission would be more a censor and there is more to learn if we actually want a full Commission. Councilor Jepsen suggested creating a fund for the various arts to fund different things. He does worry that a Commission would overreach to decide what's good and what's not, which is not a good idea.

Councilor Black-Burke said that she believed there was a process in place to speak to and put forward. She believes an Arts Commission would assist our community to find people who are interested, and for them to offer their input. There are many ways to go about this. It's a Commission, but has a strong funding arm. Councilor Black-Burke spoke in favor of the Commission and believed that we could take this up with the Council through one of the Committees. It is something very needed in our town since there are so many different art components. It would add so much to our town. It would be a great place to start and give us a process. There should definitely be input from our community to see what they are thinking. Councilor Black-Burke is looking forward to having a conversation about this and seeing this move forward.

Councilor Jepsen said that there is a very strong art program in the High School and he would love to see them also included in the Arts Commission.

Mayor Trinks agreed with Councilor Jepsen. Mayor Trinks said that he hoped for a group that would work with all the various arts in town to present all their art. There are sometimes three different art events going on in town at the same time since there is no communication between all of them. If there is a Commission, it would be better communication throughout the town. This collective group of people can meet and discuss issues with each other. The next question is do we get public input first or do we refer this to the Personnel Committee first?

Councilor Jepsen asked if this was going to be a permanent commission. Councilor Jepsen said that the Council should create the commission first and then go to the Personnel Committee.

Councilor Black-Burke said that the most recent time that we had to do this, it was referred to the Personnel Committee first and then community engagement. She thought that process worked where we discussed it as Council, referred it to the Personnel Committee and then received input. Hearing from the community directly and then informing the process is the way to go.

Councilor Rampulla Bress clarified that was the process, but in addition Assistant Town Manager Colby and she did some research prior to the meeting. They developed some ideas which then the Personnel Committee invites the community to speak about what is needed. This was done once where the Commission was drawn up and presented to the Council. So this has already gone out to the community first for their input to help develop the Commission. There is a role for the community first then the Council before we start to interview members. Councilor Rampulla Bress said that policy is a small piece but this is more about advice. She thanked Councilor Jepsen for speaking of funding of the arts and gave an example of town funding. Councilor Rampulla Bress said that the Personnel Committee would be happy to take on forming the task of the Arts Commission.

Mayor Trinks said that he believed that the Arts Commission was very important to move on. Mayor Trinks stated that he is inclined to refer the Arts Commission to the Personnel Committee.

Councilor Rampulla Bress said that yes she can take this on and would love to have help from any of her fellow Councilors.

13) RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

MOVED by Councilor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe, to:

- Accept the resignation of Max Kuziak from the Human Relations Commission
- Accept the resignation of Kevin Washington from the Central Connecticut Tourism District

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

14) MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

- a) Minutes of the April 7, 2021 Special Town Council meeting

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to approve the unapproved minutes of the April 7, 2021 Special Town Council meeting as presented.

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

- b) Minutes of the April 19, 2021 Special Town Council meeting

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to approve the unapproved minutes of the April 19, 2021 Special Town Council meeting as presented.

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

- c) Minutes of the April 21, 2021 Special Town Council meeting

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to approve the unapproved minutes of the April 21, 2021 Special Town Council meeting as presented.

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

- d) Minutes of the April 26, 2021 Special Town Council meeting

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to approve the unapproved minutes of the April 26, 2021 Special Town Council meeting as presented.

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

- e) Minutes of the April 28, 2021 Special Town Council meeting

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to approve the unapproved minutes of the April 28, 2021 Special Town Council meeting as presented.

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

Councilor Walker stated that the April 5, 2021 minutes were not included in this. Town Manager Souza would look into this.

15) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Ned Bacigalupo, 89 Farmstead Lane, spoke of the Arts Commission already being approved. There is already an Art Center and asked if we are paying for this with our tax dollars. Why do we need an Arts Commission if there is an Art Center? Mr. Bacigalupo said that there are definitely smoke filled rooms on who decides who gets the job and who doesn't. Mr. Bacigalupo said that Councilor Rampulla Bress admitted there are not enough applicants or the right

applicant isn't there. He asked if with the Arts Commission would there be murals all over the town to fuel hatred to feel like the 1960's. If this affects music, there should just be a Music Commission and let the arts deal with the arts. Do a Music Commission and get rid of the Arts Commission since the Arts Center is already getting money from the town.

Councilor Rampulla Bress wanted to clarify that she did not say Mr. Bacigalupo's application would not be put through for an interview. All applicants would be interviewed, but wanted to explain that no one was interviewed this month. Please wait for the next month's meeting and you will be interviewed.

Councilor Jepsen explained that the April 5, 2021 minutes were approved at the Special Meeting of April 19, 2021.

Mayor Trinks told Councilor Walker to address the minutes at the next meeting.

16) EXECUTIVE SESSION

17) ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councilor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Ozaki
Recording Secretary