



**TOWN COUNCIL
HYBRID MEETING – VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON
February 22, 2022
Regular Town Council Meeting
Council Chambers**

APPROVED MINUTES

1) CALL TO ORDER

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

Present: Mayor Donald Trinks, Deputy Mayor Lisa Rampulla Bress, Councilor Nuchette Black-Burke, Councilor James Dobler, Councilor Ronald Eleveld, Councilor Kenneth Smith, Councilor Jody Terranova and Councilor Len Walker

Absent: Councilor Kristin Gluck Hoffman

2) PRAYER OR REFLECTION

Councilor Terranova led the group in reflection.

3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Terranova led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4) PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS

- a) Proclamation congratulating Makhi Ettienne-Modeste on attaining the status of 2022 Kid Governor Elect in the State of Connecticut

Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress read the proclamation congratulating Makhi Ettienne-Modeste on attaining the status of 2022 Kid Governor Elect in the State of Connecticut.

5) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Michele Vannelli, 1152 Poquonock Avenue, spoke of her concerns regarding a proposed three-story complex at the former Arthurs Drug store site. She recalled that Walgreens construction didn't occur because of the lack of easy truck egress and entry and inadequate patron parking. Underground parking may or may not be an answer. Ms. Vannelli questioned the need for another apartment complex and proposed, if not already done, that an independent occupancy study be conducted. She believed the Town Planning & Zoning Commission might have approved construction at the old car dealership site on Poquonock Avenue which, to date, has not occurred. Currently, sizable tax revenues are generated by corporations on Day Hill Road along with expected gains from the Amazon warehouse on Kennedy Road. As a result, Windsor

has a healthy grand list. Ms. Vannelli stated that the Town is not desperate and should not be pressured into making a decision. Windsor has great historical significance and over the decades has managed to maintain the image of a small New England community and aesthetically, she feels downtown Windsor projects are an inviting view. The location of the Arthur Drug store building at the junction established it as the single most important focal point in the downtown area. Therefore, what goes on that site needs tremendous scrutiny and careful deliberation. Ms. Vannelli is not convinced that an apartment complex maintains Windsor's charm and character. She also recommends that regardless of what is decided, this be a once and done build. The danger of phases is that they drag on with delays and lack of funds and we run the risk of this site becoming a permanent, ugly eye sore.

Marilyn Adamo, 453 Tributary Lane, and Alan Bellefleur, 427 Tributary Lane, spoke on behalf of Rivertown Village to confirm that members of the Council received the packet that was sent through the Town Manager's office. Ms. Adamo and Mr. Bellefleur stated they were available to answer any questions or concerns. Ms. Adamo is the President of Rivertown Village and Mr. Bellefleur is the Treasurer.

Eric Weiner, 76 Palisado Avenue, commented on tonight's Town Meeting and recent Personnel Committee actions. Mr. Weiner stated that tonight's vote on a \$2.8 million bond measure for a new natural gas burning HVAC system at Milo Peck was defeated. Given the challenges presented by human-caused global climate change, spending that amount of money on a system with an expected lifespan of 30+ years which exacerbates our crisis seems irresponsible to Mr. Weiner. Mr. Weiner stated that he and Susan Miller organized the turnout of voters who rejected the bond measure. The Town Council appointed Task Force on Energy and Sustainability, of which Mr. Weiner is a member, calls for the Town to cease the use of fossil fuels for HVAC purposes by Windsor's quadricentennial in 2033. Had this bond measure passed, reaching that goal would be made more difficult.

Mr. Weiner stated that an additional recommendation of the Clean Energy Task Force includes the hiring of an energy manager or consultant with the relevant expertise to properly guide the town away from fossil fuel usage. Mr. Weiner requested a pause on any new fossil fuel based HVAC expenditures until the town's engineering staff becomes better informed about the carbon-free alternatives being deployed by towns similar to Windsor. Mr. Weiner stated that we live in an increasingly technological age and direct access to a new generation of experts on energy issues is required. Mr. Weiner asked the Council to request a briefing soon on the work of the Clean Energy Task Force so that they can better guide the Town Manager on priorities for the town's future.

Regarding the Personnel Committee, it is Mr. Weiner's belief that a major injustice was done regarding the application of Leroy Smith to be a member of the Town Planning & Zoning (TP&Z) Commission. Mr. Weiner stated that, despite submitting a proper application, Mr. Smith was denied an interview by the Deputy Mayor who heads that committee. He reported that, prior to the last Personnel Committee meeting, the Deputy Mayor was made aware that Mr. Smith's application was not included in the published agenda due to a miscommunication between the Town Manger's office and Mr. Smith. Mr. Weiner stated that the Deputy Mayor had the full power

to request an amendment to the agenda per Robert's Rules of Order but, instead, created a policy that did not allow for agenda additions. In Mr. Weiner's opinion that was a grave mistake, particularly considering the immense power yielded by the TP&Z and the five-year length of the appointments. He questioned whether any favoritism was shown in the interview process where Anita Mips received an interview, but Mr. Smith did not. Mr. Weiner strongly recommended that any TP&Z related matters be tabled until this mistake has been corrected and the Personnel Committee policies are reviewed.

Mr. Weiner also expressed concerns about the current functioning of the TP&Z and the need for leadership change on that Commission.

Leroy Smith, 531 Edgewood, reported that he submitted an application for a position on the TP&Z. There were two openings, one for an alternate and one for an actual member and he submitted his application for both positions. Mr. Smith reports that an email was sent to him asking him for a time/date that was best for him to meet with the Personnel Committee but the email went to spam. The interviews were scheduled for February 10. Two days before the interviews, Mr. Smith reports he contacted the Town/Town Council to make it known that he was available for the interview. He received no response and the interviews went on as scheduled. In the meeting during the interviews, a reference was made to his application, and it was stated that, due to a rule/regulation, he could not be added to the agenda. Mr. Smith stated that he did make the request to be added to the agenda two days before the meeting and is asking for documentation of the rule/regulation that states that he could not be added to the agenda two days prior. He also requested a copy of the video. Mr. Smith stated that he is trying to promote capitalism and feels the Town exists to help those who have a need. Helping the huge corporations is not fulfilling the need. He has recommendations as to how the abatement can work. He is against abatement for those who can afford it. Mr. Smith feels he was not interviewed for TP&Z because of his vocal opinion regarding abatements.

6) COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilor Dobler – None

Councilor Walker stated that he is impressed and happy to see citizen activism. When residents have issues and concerns, they have the right to come before the Council and voice those concerns. He has concerns about the TP&Z issues brought up tonight but feels he does not have all the information to help at this time. He hopes it all can be resolved.

Councilor Terranova encouraged the continued use of masks. She stated that we are in a much better place now but not totally out of the woods yet. People should continue to wear masks, get vaccines, practice good hand washing and social distancing. In the Spring, once we open things up and get outside more, we will likely turn the corner but she advises people to remain cautious for a little longer.

Councilor Eleveld reminded those who vote at L.P. Wilson, JFK School, and 330 Windsor Avenue that there is a special election on March 1st if they vote at those locations. Voting is a right and responsibility.

Councilor Black-Burke thanked those who spoke tonight. She reported that she and Councilor Terranova recently attended 'Interpreting Black History' presented by the Windsor Historical Society (WHS) and Human Relations Commission and there was great dialogue. She encouraged people to visit the WHS website. She also reported that she and Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress recently attended an event celebrating and recognizing the mentorship program brought to us by the Office of Family and Community partnerships for Windsor Public Schools. At this event, Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress presented a proclamation to Ms. Morales and the team for their work with the mentorship program. Anyone interested in being a mentor should contact Ms. Morales at the Office of Family and Community Partnerships. Councilor Black-Burke shared that on February 23 from 1–6 p.m., the Department of Labor along with Griffin Hospital will hold a vaccination clinic for ages five and up in Bloomfield at Rehoboth Church of God. Councilor Black-Burke also shared that on February 24, the award-winning Windsor High School music department will present the Stevie Wonder Experience. This is a tribute concert being held at 7 p.m. It is free and masks are required.

Councilor Smith reported on having attended a cheer competition Saturday at RHAM High School at which the Windsor High School cheer team performed. They did a great job and represented Windsor well. Councilor Smith stated that it has been almost three months since he's been elected. He identified himself as a blue-collar worker amongst many Council members with political experience and expertise in many other areas. Councilor Smith stated that when one committee member cannot attend a meeting, under the Council Rules of Order, that committee member can ask another member to substitute for them. This happened recently and Councilor Smith asked another member to substitute for him. He reports that the Chair of the committee decided that the substitute was not acceptable and appointed a member of the Chair's party, precluding any minority representation. When asked, the Chair said there did not have to be a minority, which is a contradiction to *CT General Statutes* Section 9-167A which addresses minority representation. When there are three people on a panel only two can be from one party. Councilor Smith stated that, going forward, the following substitutions will be made to give Windsor citizens the best representation: Councilor Eleveld will substitute for Councilor Smith on the Finance Committee, Councilor Smith will substitute for Councilor Walker on the Health & Safety Committee, Councilor Walker will replace Councilor Eleveld on the Town Improvements Committee, and Councilor Gluck Hoffman will remain on the Personnel Committee. Councilor Smith asked that this communication be considered as the required notification of the Chairs of the Committees regarding the substitution as stated in Section 24 under, 'Meeting of Standing Committees' in the Council Rules of Order.

Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress thanked people for expressing their opinions this evening. Regarding Councilor Smith's comments, Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress explained that it is her third year on the Council and she has no background in government or finance either but it has been a great learning experience. If you are a citizen who has a desire and you care about your community, you can come in, serve and learn. You just have to want to serve your community.

Mayor Trinks stated that, while he appreciates the minority party making new rules up as far as Committee assignments go, there are Committee assignments that were given by the Mayor and if the Council Rules of Order are not going to put any substance to the Mayor's authority, then it is time for them to start looking at the Council Rules of Order. The Council Rules of Order were thought out and are there for a reason. Mayor Trinks thinks that the terms substitution and replacement are being interchanged. He will look into the situation as presented by the minority party.

7) REPORT OF APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

a) Public Building Commission

Mayor Trinks stated that everyone should have received a copy of the Public Building Commission report and questions could be directed to Assistant Town Manager Scott Colby, as a representative from the Commission was not present.

8) TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

COVID-19 Vaccination Data and Clinics

Per data published by the CT Department of Public Health on February 17th, 78.38% of our total population has been fully vaccinated, while the state wide rate is 77.19%. Our rate is up from 76.52% on January 26th. Of children between 5 and 11 years of age, 42.09% of that group has received at least one dose and 35.29% has been fully vaccinated. 81.30% of town residents, 5 years old and above, have been fully vaccinated.

The following are upcoming vaccination clinics:

For first, second, and booster shots for children ages 5-11 and anyone 12 and older:

- **Wednesday, March 2, 2022** from 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at LP Wilson Community Center - 599 Matianuck Avenue, Windsor. No appointment is needed.
- **Wednesday, March 23, 2022** from 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at LP Wilson Community Center - 599 Matianuck Avenue, Windsor. No appointment is needed.

Residents are encouraged to get vaccinated and/or to get a booster shot as well as to continue to take appropriate precautions including wearing a mask while indoors, social distancing and frequent hand washing. For more information, call the Health Department at 860-285-1823.

Free Marriage Licenses on Valentine's Day

The Town Clerk's office continued the long standing tradition of issuing couples free marriage licenses on Valentine's Day. This year two couples received a free marriage license and were joined in matrimony at town hall by Justice of the Peace Anita Mips. To highlight the day, Channel 3 local news filmed one of the weddings and aired a story of the event on the evening news. Additionally, one lucky couple won a raffle basket containing items donated by the following generous local merchants: Blue Dragonfly, Ewe & You, Marriott Hotel, Moneta

Moments and the Windsor Chamber of Commerce. The Town Clerk's office is grateful for their support in making this event extra special for the couples.

State Assembly District 5 – Special Election

Absentee ballots for the March 1st Special Election, to fill a vacancy in the seat for the State Assembly District 5, are available in the Town Clerk's office. Only those voters who reside in the 5th Assembly District, which includes Voting District 1, 2, and 3, are eligible to vote in the election. Voters may vote in person at the Town Clerk's office from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. The deadline to apply for an absentee ballot is Monday, February 28th at 5:00 p.m. All absentee ballots must be returned by 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 1st. For voters' convenience, any voted absentee ballot may be delivered to the official absentee ballot drop box located in the rear parking lot of the Town Hall at 275 Broad Street. The absentee ballot drop box is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week until Election Day.

Polls for the Special Election will be open from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 1st. Voting District 1 – L.P. Wilson Community Center, Voting District 2 – Kennedy School and Voting District 3 – 330 Windsor Ave Community Center will be open for voting. For more information, visit the town website or call the Town Clerk's office at 860-285-1902.

Councilor Black-Burke asked Assistant Town Manager Scott Colby to repeat the hours of the Town Clerk's office for absentee ballots. Assistant Town Manager Scott Colby stated that voters may vote in person at the Town Clerk's office between the hours of 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

9) REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Town Improvements Committee – Councilor Dobler – None

Finance Committee – Councilor Terranova reported that the Finance Committee met last week. Auditors were present for the first part of the meeting and the FY21 audit was reviewed with them. It was another strong audit with no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses. Revenue was over budget by \$4 million last year and expenditures were under budget by \$1.9 million. About a half a million of that was savings from the Board of Education. The General Fund Unassigned Fund balance has grown to \$31 million which is about 25% of the adopted budget expenditures.

Councilor Terranova also stated that mid-year financials were also discussed, looking at revenues and expenditures at the halfway point. About 90% of revenues have been collected and expenditures are at 49%.

The Committee also received updates from the Enterprise Funds. The Discovery Center has been having some challenges, but they received a grant from the Office of Early Childhood in the amount of \$70,000 to help offset some of their losses this year. The Caring Connection still has some challenges related to COVID-19 but has recruited a few new clients. The landfill and transfer station are doing well.

The Unassigned Fund Balance Policy was updated a few years ago and the recommended percentage of the current General Fund budgeted expenses increased from 8 to 11% to 15-20%. 20% is the upper limit of what should be in there and it is currently at about 25%. The policy doesn't speak to what to do when the funds go above the recommended percentage. The Finance Committee is looking at adding some language that would provide a framework as to how to spend or distribute that money when it goes above that 20% threshold, as it only speaks to how to replenish if it goes too low. Town staff put together a framework that included setting aside 40% into a tax rate stabilization fund, similar to what has been done in the past by using opening cash to lower the mill rate. It would also include setting aside 20% for capital projects, 20% for OPEB, and 20% for clean energy and other sustainable projects. Other topics discussed were possibly setting some funds aside for cyber security or open space.

The fixed assessment/tax abatement policy was also discussed. The Committee reviewed goals and objectives for the policy. When adopted, it was created to ensure that the Town could attract and retain commercial tax base and it has done very well with that. The Committee discussed if there was anything else it should be used for such as workforce or affordable housing. Staff did some research which was presented to the Committee which gave them some ideas to look at. The *CT State Statute* that lists the types of businesses that can be afforded an abatement was reviewed. There are currently only a few in the Town's policy, but there are others to think about such as multi-family housing. Staff will research what that might look like and come back to the Committee with ideas. Increasing the minimum investment for a significant fiscal impact project can also be looked at. This is what warehouses tend to fall under. Increasing that threshold may be looked at and other requirements may be included such as more sustainable building or median salary wages. The Committee will have more discussion and are open to other ideas. There is room to explore and make the policy work best for the town.

The Committee also looked at other policies including the Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) policy and another for property rehabilitation. Therefore if people want to invest in a building that is older, the town can give them an incentive or tax abatement to do rehabilitation. Also, under the current tax abatement policy, current businesses that make an investment can receive a tax abatement on that investment, so they are encouraged to stay and grow in town.

Health & Safety Committee – Councilor Black-Burke reminded residents to slow down. There have been citizen complaints about speeding. A date is being vetted for the next meeting.

Personnel Committee – Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress reported that the Personnel Committee met and interviewed candidates for reappointments and for boards and commissions which are available for the Councilors to review tonight. The Committee also discussed the goals they had for the previous two years and whether to continue those goals of inclusivity and making sure that the boards and commissions represent the Town. There was an agreement to continue those goals and the minutes are available. The Committee will be meeting again in April.

10) ORDINANCES – None

11) UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a) Approve a bond ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$655,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE L.P. WILSON COMMUNITY CENTER - SENIOR CENTER AND SOCIAL SERVICES FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$655,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION."

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Smith, that the reading into the minutes of the text of the ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$655,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE L.P. WILSON COMMUNITY CENTER - SENIOR CENTER AND SOCIAL SERVICES FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$655,000 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 made available to those persons attending this meeting; and the full text of the ordinance be recorded with the minutes of this meeting."

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Gluck Hoffman absent)

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Smith, to approve an ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$655,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE L.P. WILSON COMMUNITY CENTER - SENIOR CENTER AND SOCIAL SERVICES FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$655,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION."

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Gluck Hoffman absent)

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Smith, to refer the L.P Wilson Community Center - Senior Center and Social Services facility improvements project to the Public Building Commission for oversight.

Motion Passed 8-0-0- (Councilor Gluck Hoffman absent)

12) NEW BUSINESS

- a) Approve a resolution related to having an election poll location outside of a district

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Smith, that Poquonock School is authorized to be used as a polling location for District 6 beginning with the May 10, 2022 Town of Windsor budget referendum.

Assistant Town Manager Scott Colby stated that due to the mandated redistricting, the Registrars of Voters have had to change the makeup of polling places to accommodate new district lines. One of the polling locations, Poquonock Elementary School (located in District 7) will be located outside of the boundaries of the actual district (District 6). This is primarily due to

the lack of suitable public facilities with adequate space and handicap accessibility within the respective district.

Councilor Black-Burke asked for confirmation that the polling place was outside of the district already. Assistant Town Manager Scott Colby confirmed this was correct.

Councilor Black-Burke stated that she was unsure how many people knew that it was already outside of the district. She reported that the Town Council had received correspondence expressing a concern about this and asked what the alternative would be. Mr. Colby stated that District 6, for example, currently votes at Poquonock Elementary School because there is no suitable location within that area, so they must vote outside of the district. It is very hard to find a suitable location for them. It must be that location or we would have to explore looking at another location within close proximity to that voting district.

Councilor Black-Burke stated that the community needs to be armed with information. It is best to share information with the community in a timely manner, so it does not feel as jarring. She believes that many residents did not know that it was already outside of the district.

Councilor Eleveld stated that District 7 extends all the way down to Palisado Avenue according to the state map. Unless they change the state map, District 7 runs down River Street, continues down Hayden Station Road to Palisado Avenue and then north on Palisado. It has become a bigger district. Geographically speaking, District 6 looks extremely large compared to other districts. Councilor Eleveld asked if that was because the population is approximately the same as the other districts. Assistant Town Manager Scott Colby confirmed that there have been some population shifts that have caused that.

Councilor Eleveld asked why Poquonock Firehouse could not be used. He questioned why Poquonock Firehouse would not be a viable option. Assistant Town Manager Scott Colby stated that he would need to get back to the Council on that. He believes it was because Poquonock Firehouse was not large enough for that district at the time when it was decided at the last redistricting.

Councilor Eleveld asked if Rainbow Firehouse would be large enough given the new enlarged district. Assistant Town Manager Scott Colby stated that he will need to get back to the Council about that.

Councilor Eleveld asked why it would not be possible to pull the small area in District 6 that is north/northeast of the Farmington River into District 5. Mr. Colby stated he would need to speak with the Registrar of Voters and get back to the Council.

Councilor Eleveld stated that we have nothing to say about State Senate Districts, House Districts, or Congressional Districts. He confirmed that what is being discussed is where people vote in Windsor and we have four voting districts. We now have two State Representatives which is an improvement over the four the town once had.

Motion Passed 7-1-0 (Councilor Eleveld opposed, Councilor Gluck Hoffman absent)

- b) Approve collective bargaining agreement with Windsor Police Department Employee Association

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Walker, to approve the collective bargaining agreement between the Town of Windsor and the Windsor Police Department Employee Association for the period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2024.

Assistant Town Manager Scott Colby stated the collective bargaining agreement with the Windsor Police Department Employee Association (WPDEA) expired on June 30, 2021. Negotiations have largely centered on wages, health insurance and contract language related to a variety of issues. These issues include overtime bumping and “order in” language, seniority language, tuition reimbursement benefits and requirements for officers who become qualified to work the dispatcher desk. Management and the WPDEA reached an agreement for a contract that runs from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2024. Members of the employee association have ratified the proposed agreement and the Town Council is now being requested to approve the contract.

Human Resources Director Amelia Bliss provided the following report:

The current employees’ share of the health insurance premium contribution will increase from 21% to 22% for the Century Preferred PPO plan and from 17% to 18% for the High Deductible Health Plan at the beginning of the second year of the contract, on July 1, 2022. The contributions will increase to 23% and 19% respectively on July 1, 2023.

Plan design changes include implementing prior authorizations, step therapy, and duration and quantity management for the prescription drug benefits associated with the High Deductible Health Plan so it is in line with the prescription benefits associated with the PPO plan.

The HMO will be eliminated effective 6/30/22, as the pricing and benefits are similar to the PPO plan and enrollment is low.

Bargaining unit members will have the option to enroll in the town’s vision plan. The cost share will be the same as for the PPO plan.

The average general wage increase over the three-year contract is 2.42%. There will be a 2.50% increase effective and retroactive to July 1, 2021, plus the top two steps for police officers hired after November of 2016 were increased by \$500 to help close the gap between officers at the top step who were hired prior to 2016 and those who were hired after 2016. There will be a 2.50% increase effective July 1, 2022 and a 2.25% average increase effective July 1, 2023.

Other changes include:

- Updating the Equal Employment Opportunity Language to include any discrimination prohibited by state, federal, or local law

- Increasing the notice requirement for bumping overtime and for sick leave call outs so members and management have more advance notice
- Increased the tuition reimbursement benefit from 50% of tuition costs with an annual maximum of \$1,800 to 50% of tuition costs with an annual maximum of \$2,100
- Adding rank seniority language to clarify that if an employee transfers or is demoted to a different position then subsequently permitted back into that position rank seniority starts over
- Providing Lieutenants a town car to travel to and from work
- Changing the “order-in” language to hold over the next eligible employee who is coming off shift for four hours and the next eligible employee coming on shift to come in four hours early
- Adding language that requires dispatch “desk qualified” officers to work at least one shift per month to help them maintain their dispatching skills and helping with staffing
- Increased management’s ability to have employees attend training from once each quarter to monthly

The overall total for the three years is \$580,513 which reflects an average wage increase of 2.42%. The avoided costs to the town in FY23 for the changes in the employee health plan contributions is \$42,000. We do not yet know what the savings will be for the second year because we do not know what the insurance premiums will be for that year. The cost to provide the vision plan is \$8,000 for the life of the contract assuming all eligible employees enroll in the vision coverage.

Councilor Dobler stated that many towns have had a challenge finding officers. He asked where Windsor stands from a compensation standpoint compared to surrounding towns. Ms. Bliss stated that, as part of the negotiations preparation, a survey was done and each individual position was looked at compared to surrounding towns. This was done eight months ago. There are two tiers for police officers. With regards to the pay range used now for incoming police officers, Windsor was eighth out of 13 at the minimum. The town was good with Detectives. For Sergeants, Windsor was fourth of 13. For Lieutenants, Windsor was in the top three or four.

Councilor Walker stated that whatever we can do to attract more police officers and make them comfortable with their compensation is a good thing. He feels Windsor has a good Police Department. Not many complaints are received about them. Many departments around the country today have difficulty recruiting. Many times, it is not how much the officers are paid but, rather, it is how the government/state/municipality treats and respects their officers. Windsor has a great Chief and team.

Councilor Eleveld asked if the department no longer has Captains. Ms. Bliss stated there is one Captain position.

Councilor Eleveld asked for confirmation that the Captain does has a vehicle. Chief Melanson confirmed this.

Councilor Eleveld asked how many Lieutenants we have. Chief Melanson stated we currently have three Lieutenant positions, two of which are currently vacant. We are in the process of doing some promotional exams to fill those spots.

Councilor Eleveld asked why we are providing Lieutenants with a town car to travel to and from work. He asked if they are on call 24 hours a day or if this is because of competition relative to getting quality people. Chief Melanson explained that it is a combination of both. Lieutenant positions in all surrounding areas do provide take home cars. Lieutenants are considered part of the leadership team of the Police Department. They are the first call for any major incidents. Finding candidates that want to take the Lieutenant exams can be challenging. They are eliminated from most overtime. They only get overtime if no one else wants it. A brand-new Sergeant makes more than a Lieutenant because of overtime availability. This is part of an initiative to increase the pool of candidates and build future leadership.

Councilor Black-Burke expressed appreciation for the discussion regarding the competitiveness of salaries. She also stated that she is very glad to see that training opportunities have been added. Given the current culture and climate, this is very much needed. She appreciates it being called out and feels it makes our Town that much more competitive. Ms. Bliss stated that this was on Chief Melanson's list, and they were glad to be successful in negotiating this.

Councilor Smith asked how many people this contract covers and asked for it to be broken down into up to eight years, 9-15 years, and over 15 years. Chief Melanson reported that this contract covers 50 positions and includes the Animal Control Officer, Detectives, Sergeants, and Lieutenants. Under five years is around 20-25 officers. In the 10-20 year group is probably another 15. There are about eight or nine in the 20-25 year range.

Councilor Smith asked if there is any trouble retaining officers. Chief Melanson reported that younger officers are not driven by overtime and finances as much as in the past. Younger officers are looking for more time off, more flexibility, more fair work schedules, and being able to bid shifts more frequently. This is being worked on.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Gluck Hoffman absent)

13) RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS – None

14) MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

a) Minutes of the January 31, 2022 Special Town Council Meeting

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Black-Burke, to approve the unapproved minutes of the January 31, 2022 Special Town Council meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Gluck Hoffman absent)

b) Minutes of the February 7, 2022 Public Hearing

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Black-Burke, to approve the unapproved minutes of the February 7, 2022 Public Hearing as presented.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Gluck Hoffman absent)

c) Minutes of the February 7, 2022 Regular Town Council meeting

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Rampulla seconded by Councilor Black-Burke to approve the unapproved minutes of the February 7, 2022 Regular Town Council meeting as presented.

Councilor Smith noted a correction must be made to reflect that under Unfinished Business, items 11a and 11b, it was Councilor Smith that opposed the motions, not Councilor Eleveld.

Motion Passed as amended 8-0-0 (Councilor Gluck Hoffman absent)

15) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS – None

16) EXECUTIVE SESSION

17) ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councilor Eleveld, seconded by Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress, to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 p.m.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Councilor Gluck Hoffman absent)

Respectfully Submitted,

Deanna Schuetz
Clerk of the Town Council