



**TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
SPECIAL HYBRID MEETING
APRIL 20, 2022
APPROVED MINUTES**

1) CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trinks called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

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

2) DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Eric Barz, Town Planner, Lauri Volkert, Fire Inspector, and Patrick McMahon, Economic Development Director, were present to answer questions.

Mr. Barz reported that overall expenditures for FY 22 are expected to come in over budget by \$545,160 or 37.9% primarily due to the use of American Rescue Funds (ARF) for the Small Business and Nonprofit Recovery Grant program. The General Fund expenditures for FY 22 are expected to be under budget by \$7,090 or 0.5% due to Personal Services. The overall FY 23 budget reflects an increase of \$65,120 or 4.5% as compared to the FY 22 budget mostly due to Personal Services.

Mr. Barz stated that in FY 22, several major projects, totaling over 1.4 million square feet were approved by the Town Planning and Zoning Commission (TPZC) or staff.

Other projects that are undergoing inspections or completed this year include the second Amazon Distribution Center, the Public Safety Complex, a warehouse flex building, and the Day Hill soccer dome, as well as renovations and additions for Traveler's Insurance, Loomis Chafee's NEO Theater, Data Mail's Day Hill location, and Millbrook Village.

The TPZC also approved several major zoning text amendments to accommodate transit-oriented and workforce housing in Windsor Center, affordable accessory apartments throughout town, and economic development in Great Pond.

Economic Development organized and hosted a successful job fair in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce to assist local businesses in recruiting employees with more than



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35 businesses and 45 job seekers participating. They also facilitated three grant programs: a successful Small Business and Nonprofit Recovery Grant that provided over \$520,000 to more than 55 businesses and nonprofits using American Rescue Funds (ARF), a pending application for a \$2.5 million grant from the CT Communities Challenge Grant program in support of a key redevelopment project in Windsor Center, and a successful open space trail grant for designing a Connecticut River Trail extension connecting the Windsor Center Trail to the river trail at East Barber Street.

FY 23 Goals Highlights include:

The Building Safety team will be implementing new state fire and building codes proposed to be adopted in the fall of 2022.

Development Services will facilitate the implementation of the second phase of Great Pond Village, which will include a mix of housing styles.

The Planning Department will complete the state-mandated affordable housing plan and incorporate it into the residential development chapter of the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). Several new chapter updates will be launched, dealing with conservation and sustainability topics, moving towards the incremental completion of the entire POCD by 2025.

Economic and Community Development will promote new investment in the Wilson neighborhood by leveraging its status as a Federal Opportunity Zone and facilitating small business recovery assistance throughout the town in cooperation with local and regional partners seeking to link local businesses to resources and opportunities.

Planning and Economic and Community Development will facilitate planning for the development of the proposed Wilson Gateway Park on the former redevelopment parcel and pursue Windsor Center development projects in support of the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plan.

Councilor Black-Burke asked if there were any dollars attached to the Wilson designation. Mr. McMahon stated yes, but it doesn't necessarily provide any grant money. He said that it's essentially a way for someone who has a high net worth to delay the impact of capital gains by investing their funds in a qualified opportunity zone. It's mostly a private sector activity that someone's net worth has to be tied in within that district. Mr. McMahon said that their role is to let people know that Wilson is an opportunity district and eventually investors would invest their money.

Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress commented how very busy they were this year and congratulated them for all they have been doing and did. She truly appreciated how quickly the funds are given to assist people in the community.



Councilor Eleveld asked what an accessory apartment is. Mr. Barz explained that it is an apartment allowed in a single-family residence that is lesser than 1,000 sq. feet or 30% of the habitable floor area of the principal dwelling. Councilor Eleveld asked if all the money from the small business and non-profit recovery grant have been spoken for. Mr. McMahon said that there is a balance of approximately \$700,000 to work with. Town Manager Souza stated that the application is closed for that. Town Manager Souza said that they have asked the Town Council to allocate that balance for the Small Center Support Center.

Mayor Trinks asked Town Manager Souza about the entry for the American Rescue Fund and is that going to appear in the budget book for only what we have allocated. Town Manager Souza said that it would show.

Councilor Smith asked about Great Pond Village and if the second phase would truly be using a business? Mr. Barz said that Great Pond was going to build a warehouse there that Chewy was supposed to go into. If not Chewy, another tenant could utilize it. Mr. Barz stated that they did create a new lot there called the Economic Development Zone.

Town Manager Souza said that on the south side of Day Hill Road that Great Pond owes, Verizon has purchased the property on Great Pond Drive. Verizon is planning on constructing in multiple phases a data center.

Councilor Eleveld asked Town Manager Souza if the money gets used there could be adding money into our budget book. Town Manager Souza stated no since Council appropriated those funds as they went along. Councilor Eleveld asked if it's going to be an addendum to the budget book and not part of the budget. Town Manager Souza said that it would be in the FY23 column and could carry over to multiple years. Town Manager Souza said that you can view it as a non-general fund dollar, but other sources.

Councilor Smith said that mirrors what Mayor Trinks said that technology that didn't go over budget but added in. Town Manager Souza said that is correct.

Mayor Trinks asked if the abatement went only for Chewy or the land. Town Manager Souza said it was with that particular tenant that Town Council approved. The abatement does not go with the property.

3) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Patrick McMahon, Director of Economic Development Director and Flavia Rey De Castro, Community Development Specialist, reported the following on FY 23 budget.

Mr. McMahon stated that for the current fiscal year, our overall expenditures are expected to come under budget by \$13,920 or 3.6% with no changes to the General Fund portion.



This expenditure decrease is due to lengthier construction projects resulting in lower associated contractual services costs.

For FY 23, the proposed budget shows an overall decrease of \$33,540 or 8.8%, with the General Fund portion increasing by \$980 or 0.9% in comparison to the FY 22 budget. This decrease is driven by a projected decrease in loans and associated services.

The proposed budget assumes that Community Development will be awarded a Small Cities grant of \$400,000 to be spent over the course of two years from the award signing date.

Ms. Rey De Castro reported that the primary goal of Community Development is neighborhood preservation. This is done through the housing rehabilitation program. This program has been funded primarily with grants and program income, which is the repayment of loans.

Goals for FY 23 include:

- Expand the program's ability to meet the need to rehabilitate housing stock by applying for additional grant funds from the Connecticut Department of Housing.
- Build relationships and seek partners to maximize Community Development Block Grant funds and to enhance the town's Housing Rehab. Program.
- Continue to work towards strengthening the community via the Human Relations Commission and the Wilson/Deerfield Advisory Committee.

Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress thanked the Community Development Department. She stated that she had attended many Human Relations Workshops which were well attended and well done. She also thanked the Department for continuing to seek out grants for our communities. She stated that she and Councilor Smith have talked about safety issues in multi-family apartments.

Councilor Smith asked if they work with the Windsor Housing Authority at all. Ms. Rey De Castro said that last year the Department helped Windsor Housing Authority promote the Housing Choice Voucher Program and also communicated with them about funding.

Councilor Black-Burke stated that the Wilson Deerfield area appreciates all the work that has been done.

4) ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES



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Finance Department

Jim Bourke, Finance Director, was available to answer questions raised by the Town Council.

Human Resources

Amelia Bliss, Human Resources Director, was available to answer questions raised by the Town Council.

Information Technology

Frank Angelillo, Information Technology Director, was available to answer questions raised by the Town Council.

Risk Management

Marty Maynard, Risk Manager, was available to answer questions raised by the Town Council.

Assessor's office

Larry Labarbera, Town Assessor, was available to answer questions raised by the Town Council.

Tax Collector

Cathy Elliot, Tax Collector, was available to answer questions raised by the Town Council.

Administrative Services supports town operations by providing our other departments with financial, personnel, and information resources, so that they may deliver their products and services more effectively to the community.

We also provide property assessment and tax collections services, and we protect town and school assets and personnel from the risk of loss through our risk management services.

The overall FY 22 expenditures for Administrative Services are expected to come in under budget by approximately \$7,000 or 0.2%. This is due to savings in Personal Services from part-time, partial-year vacancies in Human Resources, and the Tax Assessor and Tax Collector offices.



The overall FY 23 budget is expected to increase by approximately \$188,000 or 6.8% due to Personal Services and use of special revenue funding for an anticipated delinquent property tax sale. The FY 23 General Fund budget reflects an increase of \$160,000 or 6.1% primarily due to transitioning a part-time position into a full-time position in the Tax Assessors Office, equating to .75 FTE's for the year. This Assessment Technician will assume the duties of the current clerk and in addition will perform revaluation fieldwork. The Personal Services increase also includes funding for succession planning for a retirement in the Finance Department.

Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress asked about new residents in town and how that impacts the assessments. Mr. Labarbera said they do not do that every year, but every five years. Deputy Major Rampulla Bress asked if he knew how many people have bought homes in Windsor. Mr. Labarbera said that he doesn't know the exact number, but he could get that information. Sales were stronger earlier, but have slowed down.

Councilor Smith asked about the anticipated property tax sale. Mr. Bourke said that every other year there is a tax sale for delinquent taxes which doesn't affect the general fund. Town Manager Souza said that is for legal notices for delinquent taxes that we receive back. Ms. Elliot said that every other year there is a tax auction for delinquent property taxes which is for three or more years of delinquent taxes or more than \$20,000 total due to the town. There are numerous notices sent out so the owners can contact the Tax Collector to work out a payment plan with them. Ms. Elliot said there were 37 properties and when it came time there were only five properties auctioned off. Ms. Elliot said that she has a running tally of each property and any expenses that occur are charged back to the property. The minimum bid at the auction is everything that is owed in taxes, interest and reimbursed for all the costs. Councilor Smith asked how covid affected worker's comp figures. Mr. Maynard said that just before covid, there was a decline and during covid there have been fewer injuries. From a reporting standpoint, we increased by 300 for covid exposure claims, but there was no money attached to those claims.

Councilor Eleveld asked about the seventy public computers, is that computers or physical desks. Mr. Bourke said that it was computers at the library.

Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress thanked Ms. Elliot for working with the public and reducing the number of suctioned properties. Town Manager Souza stated that Ms. Elliot puts together payment plans and appreciates her efforts. Mayor Trinks said that it is worth noting that during the last two years her collection rate has been spot on.

5) GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Linda Collins, Assistant Finance Director, gave the following report:

The General Government budget makes up approximately 1% of the entire town budget and is comprised of 10 diverse town functions. They include activities for the Town



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Council and appointed Boards and Commissions as well as the operations of the Town Manager's Office. General Government also includes funding for, the Town Attorney, Treasurer, elections, the Greater Windsor Probate Court, Independent Audit, and Intergovernmental and Community Services.

The General Government general fund's Fiscal 2022 expenditures are estimated to come in over budget by \$29,240 or 2.7%. This is mostly due to an increase in the Counsel & Legal Advice budget for worker's compensation litigation as well as an unanticipated special election for a State Representative seat in March of 2022 that wasn't budgeted for.

The Fiscal 2023 General Government's general fund proposed budget is \$1,219,070 and reflects an increase of \$120,480 or 11.0% as compared to the Fiscal 2022 budget. This increase is due to three elections budgeted in FY 23 versus two in FY 22, as well as added funding of approximately \$38,690 for processing absentee ballots.

Councilor Eleveld said that he is glad to see that the Town Council budget is on par. The Probate Court has gone up almost 16% and asked if this is related to a rental agreement we have with South Windsor. Ms. Collins said that it's from increased fees for supplies and the percentage that we pay. Ms. Collins said that is prorated based on each town's grant list.

Councilor Black-Burke stated that there is an increase in estimated community expenditures. She asked if there is a cap on what can be awarded for community services. Town Manager Souza said that there is not a cap, but Council has established a setup overall. Project Ascend is level-funded. Earlier in the year, Town Council was approached by Caribbean Culture Alliance for \$700,000 the only new program request this budget year.

Councilor Smith asked if these donations were vetted by balance sheet or performance sheet from the year before. Town Manager Souza said that this may be a two-year program, but not an ongoing one.

Councilor Walker said that the Caribbean Culture is a program that is supported by UConn and by the Historic Society. This is going back to the stories and history of farmworkers. There are traveling exhibitions of visuals with audio. Councilor Walker encouraged all Councilors to support this endeavor.

Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress said that she believed this parallels the Windsor Story and does develop the Caribbean community more. Councilor Walker stated that it is and people will tell their stories.



Councilor Eleveld asked about the Community Health grant and if we are paying for a full-time person in the Police for that. Town Manager Souza stated that there is a contract that is budgeted in the Police department for a half-time clinician. They are hoping to move the position to full-time using the American Rescue Fund monies. Town Manager Souza said that these funds are more general for Community Health Services to provide services to our residents. Councilor Eleveld said that First Town Downtown is supported by the businesses in town so why is there funds for that. Town Manager Souza stated that this is a portion of their budget. Councilor Eleveld thought there was a requirement over a certain dollar amount that a copy of their budget was supposed to be made available to the Council. Town Manager Souza said that there is a budget sheet that is included in the packet. Town Manager Souza stated that First Town Downtown has taken on functions that the town used to do such as concerts on the green and Nightmare on Broad Street Halloween.

Councilor Walker asked if that was all the Police Cadets asked for. Ms. Collins said that they requested \$11,000. Councilor Walker said that he would like to see them get \$15,000.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman asked why the Network against Domestic Abuse was so low. Town Manager Souza said that he does not have that information and will follow up. Councilor Gluck Hoffman asked about the Volunteer Appreciation and who are the volunteers that get nominated. Town Manager Souza said that they are all the appointed members of the Town Council's advisory committee and volunteers from Social services, Senior Service, Senior Center, and Library. Town Manager Souza stated that they are in the planning stages to pull something together for this spring.

Deputy Mayor Rampulla Bress said that unfortunately in the last two years, we haven't had Volunteer Appreciation.

Councilor Eleveld asked about the special elections and cost expenditures. There was an \$11,000 cost for only three districts. Ms. Collins said that the amount depends on the type of election.

6) GENERAL SERVICES/CAPITAL SPENDING

Jim Bourke, Finance Director, gave an overview of General Services/Capital Spending as follows:

General Services section of the budget, which begins on page Q-1. The FY 22 expenditures are expected to come in over budget by approximately \$49,000. The FY 23 budget reflects an increase of approximately \$435,000 over the FY 22 adopted budget, or about 2.6%



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For debt service, we are proposing a 3% general fund increase over the FY 22 budgeted amount, which is consistent with the town council's policy target and long-term strategy over the past several years.

The general fund allocation for capital projects is proposed to increase by \$166,000 and will fund pavement management projects, sidewalk repairs, and fleet replacements.

The MDC payment for sewer services will increase approx. \$250,000 for FY 23 and this is based on the MDC's calendar year 2022 budget.

The FY 23 budget for Great Pond is increasing by \$86,000 for a total of \$488,000. This amount represents 50% of the taxes that will be collected from the parcels located at Great Pond. The increase for FY 23 is due to increased assessed value that resulted from the completion of the first phase of construction at Great Pond.

The general services component of the worker's compensation and liability Insurance budget is expected to increase by \$53,000 as compared to the FY 22 budget. This increase is driven by incurred as well as anticipated claims, and also increases in the insurance markets nationwide.

The FY 23 funding for costs associated with the next revaluation is proposed at \$10,000. The next revaluation will be for the grand list year 10/1/2023 and will be applicable to the FY 25 budget.

The FY 23 budget for the town's contribution to long-term retiree health costs (OPEB) reflects an increase of \$25,000 (\$25K in general services; TSE is not changing). FY 23 will be the ninth year the town has contributed towards funding the town's long-term other post-employment obligations. The balance in the OPEB trust fund is projected to be approximately \$6 million on June 30, 2022. This amount consists of the town contributions and accumulated investment earnings.

And lastly, a transfer of \$140,000 is proposed for FY 23 from the operating budget to the Caring Connection to address the projected operating loss in the upcoming fiscal year.

Councilor Eleveld asked about the Great Pond agreement, \$78,000 is fixed regardless of the tax rate? Town Manager Souza said that is correct. Councilor Eleveld asked about an overview of retirement. Mr. Bourke said that is a reflection of claimed activities where we were experiencing less exposure than in previous years. Councilor Eleveld said that would be part of our self-insurance cost. Mr. Bourke said that is correct. Town Manager Souza said that this is flat-funded. Councilor Eleveld asked about a reduction from MDC. Town Manager Souza said that MDC used a fair amount of their cash reserve to achieve a lower assessment for FY 22 and is now not using much of the revenue.



7) INSURANCE INTERNAL SERVICE FUND

Amelia Bliss, Human Relations Director, and Marty Maynard, Risk Manager, gave an overview of the Insurance Internal Service fund.

Liability Insurance and the Worker Compensation Insurance sections of the Insurance Internal Service Fund

The forecast for this coming fiscal year is that we are continuing to be in a hard market where insurance carriers are increasing premiums in some areas as high as 75%. We are conducting a bid among the two or three carriers out there insuring municipalities in the State of CT. We are recommending an 8.9% increase this coming year for the liability, auto, and property insurance policies.

Nationwide, insurance carriers are raising rates among municipalities around all lines of coverage, especially in two distinct areas, cyber liability and excess worker compensation, Windsor is no exception. This past fiscal year our cyber liability rose approximately 15%, this coming FY 23 year we are expecting an 18% increase with much more stringent underwriting standards.

Our excess worker compensation premium rose over 48%, and although we are not expecting that type of increase this coming year, however, we do expect a single-digit increase in the excess, this is all due to market corrections nationally and the global insurance climate. The insurance world has not seen market corrections such as these since the events of 9/11.

Amelia Bliss presented the Health Insurance fund and was available for questions.

Councilor Dobler asked about cyber liability and if somehow we can hit a higher liability for a lessor fee. Mr. Maynard said that cyber liability is based on the number of records you produce and underwriters look at the controls the IT Department is using. Mr. Maynard stated that we could raise the deductible which might lower the premium, but it would not justify it. Councilor Dobler said that basically it is underwriter driven and it's reassessed annually. Mr. Maynard said that is correct.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman asked if there are only specific carriers. Mr. Maynard said that there are only three carriers in the State of CT. We are presently using the largest carrier, Travelers. Councilor Gluck Hoffman asked if the State legislature is affecting Windsor. Mr. Maynard said that we were with Travelers for several years and then left Travelers and returned back to them.

Councilor Eleveld asked about liability because car values have gone up. Mr. Maynard said that is correct. The liability is driven by what we have, what we are doing to mitigate, and other underwritings by the companies. Councilor Eleveld said that we all know that



the rate increases and decreases. He said that he spoke with another town and how their claims have changed. Ms. Bliss said that we limit the number of tests through Anthem.

Councilor Terranova asked Town Manager Souza about a number of years ago we joined a reinsurance collative. Town Manager Souza said that you are referring to CT Prime established five years ago. It was a self-funded pool and the capital was not able to build enough reserves. Increasing our buying power to cause the number of lives we're insuring. The rates have been small increases over the last three years. The underwriting for Windsor is not part of a pool, but using larger buying power. Ms. Bliss said that the increase is 15% which is \$345,000. Town Manager Souza recommends staying with the cooperative.

Councilor Smith asked if the auto liability is based on fleet size. Mr. Maynard said it's based on fleet size, incidents, and claims paid out. Councilor Smith asked how big the fleet is. Mr. Maynard said that we have over 230 vehicles.

Mayor Trinks asked if the cyber policy covers the expenses and if the town ever has ransomware. Mr. Maynard said that our cyber liability covers and also pays for notification costs and credit issues. The insurance policy would take action against anything that comes from the breach.

Councilor Walker asked when the cyber attacks occur and we cannot function as a town government, will the insurance pay the ransom? Mr. Maynard said yes, up to a certain point.

Town Manager Souza said that we do have a number of training with employees which is annual. We are not just relying on insurance.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman said that it's required to take training to maintain a policy.

8) TOWN SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION

Linda Collins, Assistant Finance Director, was present to answer questions raised by the Town Council.

Expenditures in this section provide funds to meet the cost of services that the town provides for the schools.

These services include debt service, aid to private education, liability & worker's comp costs, a portion of the Risk Manager's position, retirement costs, and public work activities, and youth protection.

The FY 22 expenditures for Town Support for Education are expected to come in slightly under budget.



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The FY 23 proposed budget reflects an increase of approximately \$330,000 or 6% as compared to the FY 22 budget mostly due to debt financing for school-related capital projects and for costs associated with risk management.

Councilor Eleveld said that there are Errors and Omissions insurance and is that for the school board. Mr. Maynard said that is for the superintendent and his staff. Councilor Eleveld asked about the retirement expenses. Town Manager Souza said that as of 2014, all new employees are on the 401A Plan. The cost you are speaking of is for current employees and retirees. Councilor Eleveld asked about the 401A Plan the BOE currently has is that in their budget and is the other a pension in the past system. Town Manager Souza said that is correct. Councilor Eleveld asked if we are picking up the cost for the School Resource Officer. Town Manager Souza said that is correct. Councilor Eleveld asked what the town takes care of in the private schools. Ms. Collins said that we provide school nurses. We do get partially reimbursed from the State.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman asked about football and sports accidents. Mr. Maynard said that the number is going up.

9) ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councilor Dobler and seconded by Councilor Terranova to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Ozaki
Recording Secretary