



TOWN COUNCIL
HYBRID MEETING – VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON
January 16, 2024
Regular Town Council Meeting
Council Chambers

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

1) CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Black-Burke called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Mayor Nuchette Black-Burke, Deputy Mayor Darleen Klase, Councilor Mary Armstrong, Councilor Ronald Eleveld, Councilor Kristin Gluck Hoffman, Councilor Ojala Naeem, Councilor William Pelkey, Councilor Leroy Smith, and Councilor Walker

2) PRAYER OR REFLECTION

Councilor Gluck Hoffman led the group in prayer/reflection.

3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Gluck Hoffman led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4) PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS

5) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Zee Rubin from the Hartford Jewish Organizing Collective gave his opinions on how the Jewish community is treated in the United States. Much of his ancestry includes Alzheimer's and dementia, but the values passed down will still be everlasting. The values of compassion, perseverance and respect are at the root of his existence. He continued to explain the suffering of his ancestors and how they still suffer today and who is committing violence against his race.

Patricia Gardner, 80 White Rock Drive, stated she is coming on behalf of the Archer Memorial Zion Church to thank the Council for their participation at the Martin Luther King Jr. program. There was a great turnout from the community as well. They received many positive comments from those that attended the event. She thanked the community, Town Manager Peter Souza, the Board of Education and the Council for coming to the event.

Youness Bakr, 92 Pierce Boulevard, stated that he is delighted to be in this town. The welcome has been great and he appreciates the Council and Mayor Black-Burke's courage in hopefully presenting this resolution for a cease fire. He went through his ancestry. One thing that he finds stark and opposite to what the values of this country are built on is our support for the genocide that is going on in Gaza. It's really unconceivable to him. It seems that our government at the least, if not the whole world,

has failed the Palestinian people. The responsibility now falls to the citizens of the country. Some are standing up and speaking out against what is going on in Gaza. He thanked the Council for going forward with this.

Corrine Prescott, 75 Farm Drive in Manchester, CT stated she would like the past to speak for the present. She shared a speech that was on her phone with the group. She added that Malcolm X, Nelson Mandela and Dr. Martin Luther King would have all signed off on this resolution for a cease fire.

Jabeen Hussain at 11 Donna Lane, said he remembered that the Town Council had passed a diversity resolution affirming their support for refugees. He is very proud to be a part of a town that has consistently stood on the right side of history. He hopes the town will go forward with the resolution for a cease fire.

Amanda Harr from 77 Tracy Drive, Manchester, CT is an educator and organizer for Manchester. Although she is not a Windsor resident, she has been profoundly impacted by this community as she attends the mosque here in Windsor. She feels deeply connected to this community and that is why she is here today in support of Mayor Black-Burke and the cease fire resolution. The genocide of Palestinians has taken over 25,000 lives, including 11,000 children. She went through some statistics and stated what a journalist said about the state of Gaza. She said calling for a cease fire should not be called courageous or radical, it is the bare minimum that should be done.

Ryan Parker, 166 West Street, stated the fact that it is risky to say 'cease fire' is an injustice all in itself. He is unapologetic about a cease fire and said anti-Semitism is deeply unacceptable and stated why that was. He holds the value of human life in his heart and he does not discriminate or segregate which human beings have the right to that value. The lives under the most immediate dire threat happens to be Palestinian lives. He is against what is going on. He continued to state his concerns. He stated he supports the Mayor and going forward with a cease fire.

Nathan Wilson, 46 Berrios Hill Road, verbalized some scripture verses from the Bible.

Gentleman from 75 Kimberly Drive, Enfield, CT stated he wants to give some life to the few 25,000 innocent civilians and 11,000 children that were killed. He listed the children that were lost from one family. He hopes this gives us some understanding that these people are human and were killed in a very unjust way.

Basil Enagare from Hartford, CT said he has been involved with the Organizing Collective over the past five years and they make a very strong point during their rallies and demonstrations to amplify Palestinian voices and pro-Palestinian integration instead of going to the other side. He said what are we asking for is peace. While we call for a cease fire, they call for violence. We are asking for our people to live in peace, justice and prosperity, health, safety and success, not violence. He thanked the Mayor for bringing the cease fire forward. The cease fire is what we need now, but that is only the first step.

Adam Bulmash, resident of Hartford and representative of the Hartford Jewish Organizing Collective said they are working towards a cease fire because it is the right thing for Palestinian and Jewish liberation. He added that they firmly believe that all Jews as well as others have the right to live safely and with dignity. They unequivocally oppose any violence and oppression including anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and racism. They are calling for a cease fire in Gaza, an end to the genocide of Palestinians and an end to the occupation in Palestine. He explained what anti-Semitism is to him, gave a total of the loss of life so far and gave an update of the current violence going on. He is calling for a cease fire.

Stanley Heller, 14 Acre Place North, Danbury, said he is very happy that the Mayor has called for a cease fire. It's absolutely necessary. CNN had a report a few days ago that if you took an average number since October 7th, Palestinian children have had 10 amputations per day. This is made to seem like it's an ethnic war – Jews against Palestinians – but in this country there are many different voices amongst Jews. He is a member of "Jewish Voice for Peace." If you look on its site, it says we have 700,000 members and supporters. He added that there are different categories of hunger. Near 600,000 were in the 4th highest category which is catastrophic. The only thing worse than that is famine. We are fast approaching that and it didn't happen by accident. The Minister of Israel stated on October 9th that no food, water, etc. would get into Gaza. We must stop that and cease fire is the first step.

Emily Parker, 166 West Street, said she saw something posted a few days ago that it would take 71 full school buses to remove the children lost in Gaza. She shared a poem she wrote with the group.

6) COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilor Naeem thanked everyone that came out to speak tonight. It is critical for this Council to hear from the citizens. She thanked Mayor Black-Burke for her comments. To Councilor Eleveld's point, yes we do not have any laws we can pass as a town as far as it pertains to what the federal government controls. However, as elected officials we are here to represent the community. The decisions they make here, as difficult as they may be, the space that we create to have the dialogue and conversation is very important. So yes, please reach out to the government at the federal level, but do come back to us, because it is important for us to know what you are all thinking and for us to do what we can to uplift that voice as well. Yesterday's Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. events and activities were a day that filled both the heart and soul. She recognized Pat Gardner who hosted the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration. It was great to see so much of the community present and to hear Mayor Black-Burke as the keynote speaker.

Councilor Walker thanked all the people that came out this evening. War and conflict is never the answer. He quotes the sentiment of everyone on the dais.

Councilor Pelkey thanked everyone who came out tonight and those online. Regardless of whatever action we do or don't take on the community issues, he is happy to see a

full room. He hopes that continues. As Councilor Naeem said, if we don't hear the issues, we won't be able to help our constituents. He couldn't attend the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. event due to him having to work, but he thanked the folks that put on the event. He also thanked the Department of Public Works for the long hours they put in and do for the community. Lastly, he wanted to remind everyone, that during the snowstorm, to get their vehicles off the road so it doesn't impede the snow plow drivers from plowing the street.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman said she mirrored what Councilor Armstrong and Naeem said about how nice it is to have all of you here tonight. It's an emotional issue. Her family was persecuted to come here to the United States and she lost the name of her family. She appreciates them all coming out and for the Mayor bringing this subject to the forefront. Please continue to come and talk to the Council as it is important for us to hear what you have to say.

Councilor Eleveld thanked all the citizens that came out tonight. He heard their passion. He hopes they address their passion to others that can do something about this situation such as their U.S. Congressmen, U.S. Senators and the President of the United States. They're the ones you should be talking to and discussing these issues with. The town does not have control over this issue and we will not be able to change any government spending. Unfortunately, that is the fact. He appreciates their passion and hopes this goes to the appropriate people for resolution.

Councilor Armstrong said she is grateful for those that came out tonight. If we don't hear from you, we won't know your concerns. She did attend several Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. events. One was at the Art Center. The Center has so much to offer its citizens. She also attended an affair where the Mayor was honored with the Drum Major award. She congratulated her. She looks forward to hearing from the citizens at the public hearings we will be having on Thursday, January 18th for the solar farm and then on February 5th. She does want to convey that she does not support inhumanity or destruction of any way or manner for anyone in this world.

Deputy Mayor Klase said on January 26, the United Nations Deputy Secretary Amina J. Mohammed, stated that 'peace is now under great threat'. 6 out of 7 people worldwide are plagued by feelings of insecurity. The world is facing the highest number of violent conflicts since the second World War. Two billion people, a quarter of humanity, live in a place that is effected by conflict. There is conflict or war in Ukraine, Israel, Palestine, Afghanistan, even Ethiopia, Iraq and many more places. There are other places that are under the brink of war or under threat of conflict. As a country, we are partners to some of these conflicts as we've decided we do not see a path to peace. She was born in South Korea, a country whose people are free in many ways. Because of the United States it benefits greatly from the unwavering support of the government and its people. If we stand for peace in the world, then she must also begin to explore the use of the tools that provide the time for reflection and negotiation. When one calls for a cease fire what is being asked? According to the United Nations, a cease fire is an agreement that regulates the cessation of military activity for a given length of time for a given area. It

does not end war, oppression or hostilities. It does not include violence, and anti-Semitism. In many ways, it's a time for us to tend to humanity. She is deeply affected by the people that are suffering here and in the world. Through dialogue we here in the United States and Windsor can find a way in which we can add our light in Windsor and into the world. We have not as a Council yet discussed a resolution but she suspects this topic is not done and this conversation has just begun. She appreciates hearing the diverse voices of this community and thanked them for speaking tonight and for the call of action.

Councilor Smith said yesterday was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration day. It started at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. breakfast at the Hartford Convention Center. The speakers were awesome. His daughter was honored during that event. The second event was at the Town Hall and the Mayor spoke during that program. He wanted to repeat the words that the Mayor said and he totally supports what she has said.

Mayor Black-Burke said she was assembled in the Council Chambers yesterday in observance of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. The theme was be a Drum Major for justice, equity and peace. If not you, then who? She added that she did say there should be a cease fire on the inhumane things that occur. She wanted to share that as a Council we will not be bringing forth a resolution for the cease fire tonight. She stated she appreciated all that came out to speak, but that was not slated to be a part of this agenda. As the Mayor, her position still stands. Currently our world is marred by darkness of conflict. It is incumbent upon us to implore for a cease fire that can bring solace to the suffering. It is a priority for her that there is protection for civilians in the pursuit of peace, shared community and an appeal for the immediate cease fire. Let's spare the lives of those caught in the cross fire. As a believer, her prayer has to be accompanied by her actions that safeguard the innocents and sow seeds of peace. She is her brother's keeper. She stands by the cease fire with her words. She thanked everyone for coming out to speak. Your words have not gone unheard. She left with the phrase, "How are we holding the hearts of our brothers in their plight?"

A question was raised by a citizen addressing Mayor Black-Burke asking if there will be a resolution in the future. Mayor Black-Burke said the Council has not discussed a resolution as of yet. It was not on tonight's agenda. He understands that but he thought that it was something the Council could discuss to maybe move forward on. That is why they all came out tonight to speak.

7) REPORT OF APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

- a) Public Building Commission – no representative available to give the report.
- b) Metropolitan District Commission – no representative available to give the report.

Councilor Eleveld shared that the Council received a copy of the report from the PBC and MDC in writing for our review.

8) TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Souza gave the following report:

FY 2025 Budget Hearing

On February 5th at 7:15 PM, the Town Council will hold a Public Hearing to gather public input as part of the FY 2025 budget development process. Residents may provide their initial thoughts, ideas and suggestions concerning the upcoming budget which runs from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

Black Inventions Exhibit February 1st

On February 1st from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM at Sage Park Middle School there will be an exciting educational exhibit highlighting the many accomplishments of blacks in the fields of science, communication, health care, transportation and engineering. This event is free and open to the public.

This event is sponsored by the Windsor Freedom Trail Committee in collaboration with Sage Park Middle School and Archer Memorial AME Zion Church. For more information please email Windsorfreedomtrailct@gmail.com

Support for this event is provided through the Town's Community & Neighborhood Enhancement Program funded with American Rescue Funds.

Taste of Windsor Events

During the week of February 4-11:

Taste of Windsor Online Auction: Support First Town Downtown by bidding on an array of auction items including restaurant gift cards, weekends away, wine gift baskets and more. For more information, call 860-247-8982 or go to www.firsttowndowntown.org.

Taste of Windsor Restaurant Week: Enjoy a hybrid Taste of Windsor Restaurant Week by ordering from your favorite Windsor restaurants (dine in or take out) during the week with a percentage of your purchase going to First Town Downtown programs supporting Windsor Center. For more information, call 860-247-8982 or go to www.firsttowndowntown.org.

Cross Country Ski and Snowshoeing

Enjoy cross-country skiing and snowshoeing at Northwest Park through snow laden forests and fields. Cross-country skis and snowshoe rentals are available from the Warming Shed on weekends only from 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM. A 6" snow base is required for rentals to open. \$20 (residents) and \$25 (non-resident). Registration is needed. Visit www.townofwindsorct.com/recreation/northwest-park to reserve your timeslot and equipment.



Solar Public Informational Meeting

Town staff will be hosting a public informational meeting Thursday, January 18, 2024 at 6:30 PM at town hall in the Council Chambers to discuss the proposed solar facility at 445 River Street.

Attendees can also join virtually by going to the following link:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89705508636?pwd=VpDcWBNEA9RmfJcaax5n8dwkqgpGBq.1>

At this meeting a brief overview of the project will be provided, the Connecticut Siting Council's public participation process will be explained and attendees can ask questions and share their input on the proposed private development project.

Siting Council Virtual Meeting regarding River Street Solar Project - Update

The Connecticut Siting Council has set a Public Hearing date of February 8th regarding the proposed solar project at 445 River Street.

The hearing has two parts. There will be an evidentiary hearing starting at 2:00 p.m. for those individuals and entities that were granted party and intervenor status. The public comment portion of the hearing will start at 6:30 p.m. via zoom. The zoom links are listed below. We have updated the town's website to include this information.

Evidentiary Session – 2 PM

Attendees can join by clicking (or entering) the following link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89705508636?pwd=VpDcWBNEA9RmfJcaax5n8dwkqgpGBq.1>

No public comments will be received during the 2:00 p.m. evidentiary session.

Public Comment Session – 6:30 PM

Attendees can join by clicking (or entering) the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88382438546>

Town Clerk's office hours

The Town Clerk's office will be closed on Tuesday, January 23rd for the full day to allow staff to attend professional development training. Regular hours will commence on Wednesday, January 24th from 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM. We apologize for any inconvenience this might cause.

Deputy Mayor Klase asked if the town has reached out to citizens about the meeting regarding the solar farm that is happening on Thursday, 1/18/24. Town Manager Souza stated yes we've made individual contacts with several of the abutters and did a broadcast of the event using various social media channels.

Councilor Pelkey said thank you for being able to work on getting a live option for that meeting. He has a question about using outside counsel. The Council authorized Town Manager Souza to get the Siting Council to get a public hearing for the solar farm. Up to

that point, what has been the cost to the town? Town Manager Souza stated that at this point, he has estimated a number of hours at approximately 15 hours. We have not yet been billed. He believes it is \$275-\$285 per hour for that time. In the next two weeks that will increase as they start to prepare for the formal public hearing process on February 8th. The goal per the Town Council's direction is to be able to guide the town staff through the process with the CT Siting Council. This is a very complex process. It's not a process that town staff is familiar with on a regular basis. Town Manager Souza further explained the Town Council direction he was given for this project.

Councilor Pelkey stated our resolution was about only asking for a public hearing and for party status. Going forward, where has the appropriation been from this body for any future expenditures. Town Manager Souza stated he anticipates that there will be savings in portions of the town's General Fund for FY 24 and that we'll be able to cover those costs either through the General Services budget or General Government budgets during FY 24.

9) REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Town Improvements Committee – Councilor Smith – nothing to report.

Finance Committee – Councilor Naeem – nothing to report.

Joint Town Council/Board of Education Committee – Deputy Mayor Klase – nothing to report.

Health and Safety Committee – Councilor Armstrong – nothing to report.

Personnel Committee – Deputy Mayor Klase – nothing to report.

10) ORDINANCES - None

11) UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

12) NEW BUSINESS

- a) Introduce a bond ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$1,810,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL DRIVE RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$1,810,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION."

MOVED by Councilor Klase, seconded by Councilor Eleveld, that the reading into the minutes of the text of the ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$1,810,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL DRIVE RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$1,810,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION" is hereby waived, the full text of the ordinance having been distributed to each member of the Council and copies

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

Motion Passed 9-0-0

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Eleveld to introduce an ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$1,810,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL DRIVE RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$1,810,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION."

Suzanne Choate, Town Engineer, stated International Drive is a highly used urban roadway with heavy truck volumes. Average Daily Traffic (ADT) is estimated at approximately 7,000 vehicles per day. The most recent pavement evaluations indicate that the pavement condition of a substantial portion of International Drive southbound is within the fair to poor range with a pavement condition index (PCI) as low as 51 on the roadway. Transverse and longitudinal cracking, alligator cracking, as well as potholing and patching are visible in the pavement.

In 2020 the Town submitted two applications for state funding, through the Connecticut Department of Transportation's (CT DOT) Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) for the pavement rehabilitation of this roadway. One application was for Phase 1 (Northbound) and the second was for Phase 2 (Southbound). Phase 1 was awarded LOTICIP funding. In 2023, the northbound lanes of International Drive were reconstructed. The southbound lanes, Phase 2 of the project was not awarded grant funding.

At this time, a bond ordinance is respectively being introduced to fund Phase 2 – reconstruction of the southbound two lanes from the East Granby town line to the intersection of Rainbow Road. The project length is approximately 3,800 linear feet.

The project will remove and replace all asphalt and place it with 8" of new bituminous concrete. In areas of less than 6" of granular base, additional processed aggregate will be placed and compacted. Project scope also includes replacing bituminous curbing and catch basin tops along the roadway. Design of Phase 2 was completed in conjunction with the Phase 1 design.

Town Manager Souza gave an overview of the financial component for the project.

Councilor Smith asked about the 7,000 vehicles. Are you talking about per week, per month? Ms. Choate said it was per day in both directions.

AMENDMENT TO MAIN MOTION

MOVED by Councilor Pelkey, seconded by Councilor Eleveld to amend the main motion using \$1,700,000 for costs in connection with the International Drive Reconstruction

project and authorizing the issue of \$1,700,000 bonds and notes and \$110,000 from the General Fund Unassigned Balance to finance the appropriation.

Councilor Naeem asked for clarification from Councilor Pelkey. You are saying instead of the \$1,810,000, you'd like to bond \$1,700,000. Is that correct? Councilor Pelkey said yes that is correct and \$110,000 would come from the General Fund Unassigned Balance.

Councilor Eleveld asked Town Manager Souza how much would that save us a year. \$110,000 at 15 years? Town Manager Souza stated it would be a small number.

Councilor Smith asked how much the General Fund Unassigned Balance has in it. Town Manager Souza stated at this point in FY 24 the balance is approximately \$38.7 million.

Mayor Black-Burke asked if it is a cost benefit to take money from the General Fund Unassigned Balance versus moving forward with the way that the financing is laid out. Town Manager Souza said there would be a savings in interest over the course of the 15 years. At that dollar amount of \$110,000, it doesn't materially change the cost of borrowing and does not materially impact the Unassigned Fund balance. He doesn't see where this would disrupt an overall debt management approach for this coming spring's issue.

Motion Failed 4-5-0 (Mayor Black-Burke, Deputy Mayor Klase and Councilors Armstrong, Naeem and Smith against)

MAIN MOTION

Motion Passed 8-0-1 (Councilor Pelkey abstained)

- b) Set a Public Hearing for February 5, 2024 at 7:15 p.m. on bond ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$1,810,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL DRIVE RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$1,810,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION."

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Eleveld that a Public Hearing be held in the Council Chambers at the Windsor Town Hall on February 5, 2024 at 7:15 p.m. (prevailing local time) on the following ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$1,810,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL DRIVE RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$1,810,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION" and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk is authorized and directed to post and publish notice of said Public Hearing.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- c) Approve an appropriation of \$350,000 from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance to fund the FY 24 Stormwater Management project

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Eleveld to approve an appropriation of \$350,000 from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance for the FY 24 Stormwater Management Improvement project.

Suzanne Choate, Town Engineer, stated in previous years, stormwater monies were used to repair drainage on Mack Street, Brewster Road, Preston Street, beginning work on Abbey Lane and to fund materials, supplies and rental equipment needed by the Department of Public Works staff to complete a variety of outfall improvements, slope stabilization and detention basin improvements throughout town.

Currently, staff has identified the following projects and uses of these funds:

- Abbey Lane drainage pipe repairs
- Pheasant Run drainage improvements
- Materials for DPW stormwater projects
- Outfall Repairs and Improvements
- Detention Basin Repairs and Improvements

The requested FY 2024 amount is \$350,000. It is requested the project be funded through use of cash reserves versus bond financing as originally outlined in the FY 24 Capital Improvements Plan. This funding approach avoids an estimated \$140,000 in interest costs if bonded over a 15 year period. The recommended funding source is the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance which has an estimated balance of \$38.7 million.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- d) Introduce an appropriation in the amount of \$4,355,000 for the development of Wilson Park project at 458 Windsor Avenue utilizing \$4,000,000 from the Connecticut Community Investment Fund and \$355,000 in American Rescue Funds

“MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Pelkey to introduce an appropriation entitled, “AN APPROPRIATION OF \$4,355,000 FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WILSON PARK PROJECT, AND AUTHORIZING THE USE OF \$4,000,000 IN CONNECTICUT COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUNDS AND \$355,000 IN AMERICAN RESCUE FUNDS TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION.”

Town Manager Souza stated at this point, it is recommended that the Town Council consider the following: introduction of an appropriation, as well as introducing a resolution to set a referendum date and ballot question. The project per Sec 9-3 of the *Town Charter* requires a referendum as it exceeds 3% of this fiscal year’s tax levy. It is recommended that on February 5, 2024 the Town Council act on the funding appropriation and decide whether to set a referendum date and question for March 12, 2024.

This parcel, at the gateway to Wilson, provides an opportunity to develop an inviting multi-purpose park that helps bring neighborhood and community residents together in both informal and formal ways. To help guide the park design process the following vision or goal elements were utilized:

- Connect people and places
- Activate public space for individuals / families and community
- Enhance the gateway to the neighborhood
- Complement existing and future park network and assets

The park design includes a range of features such as walking paths, significant play features for children, informal gathering areas, performance or event spaces, and ample landscaping.

Our design firm, BSC Group, conducted a multi-channel approach to securing input on the design and had developed bid-level documents.

Site enhancements include site grading, utilities, parking areas / walkways, and allocations for site amenities, play structures, pavilion/amphitheater and furnishings. Based on bids received the project cost including a contingency is estimated to be \$4.35M. This exciting project will transform a long underutilized parcel into a multi-dimensional park that will provide an array of amenities for the neighborhood residents as well as the entire community.

If authorized and approved at a referendum, construction would be anticipated to start early this summer and be completed for use in summer 2025.

It is proposed that the Town Council consider setting a referendum question for the full project scope on March 12, 2024. In order to do so a formal vote on the date and the ballot question would need to be taken by no later than February 5, 2024.

Councilor Eleveld asked what are the lines going across the picture? Is that an electrical line? Town Manager Souza said it is drainage easement for stormwater that comes from the State Road and has an outfall at Decker's Brook.

Councilor Eleveld asked if the bathroom will be permanent or is it port-a-lets under a roof? Town Manager Souza said the bid documents had a number of bid alternates. One of those was a small bathroom/storage facility. We set that up in case the bids came in and we had to reduce the scope, we would be able to easily reduce certain elements. So the construction amount of \$3.7 million does include the big cost for a restroom. It is a masonry building.

Councilor Smith asked about the \$4,000,000 from the Community Investment funds and the \$355,000 in Rescue Act funds. Are they both based on reimbursement or do you get cash up front? Town Manager Souza said the ARF fund (federal money) we have in hand and the Community Investment Funds would be a reimbursement.

Councilor Pelkey asked if he looks at the layout and we have the access to East Barber Street would that be wide enough to bring in a small stage? Are we going to be paving and connecting to that property? Town Manager Souza said access to the rear is wide enough for a vehicle. There may be a small portion of that access as it gets to East Barber Street which would be up against a divider, fence or boulder (that we will install) right along that parking lot there. Right when you get to East Barber Street it will become narrow because you have the brook there.

Councilor Walker said he knows with revaluation there will be many questions asked. When we put this item out for referendum, many folks that don't have enough information may think that the Council will be wasting money. It was realized that good publicity goes a long way. If we don't do that, this might fail. He is supportive of this project. Originally, the lot was set up to have housing on it. However after much reach out to the community, it was decided the community wanted open space at that location.

Mayor Black-Burke stated this has been an ongoing conversation since she has come onto the Council in 2018. We know that revaluation is coming, but this has been something that has been progressively moving along. We are grateful for the state funds that have been given to us to see this project through. The Wilson/Deerfield Advisory Committee has done a lot of work. This spans through three different Councils. Councilor Walker is ensuring we are doing our part as Councilors to help folks know and to educate people on what is happening with the Wilson Gateway park.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- e) Introduce a resolution to set a referendum date and approve ballot language for the Wilson Park project at 458 Windsor Avenue

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Eleveld to introduce the following resolution: "RESOLVED, pursuant to Section 9-3(a) of the Charter, the appropriation entitled '**AN APPROPRIATION OF \$4,355,000 FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WILSON PARK PROJECT, AND AUTHORIZING THE USE OF \$4,000,000 IN CONNECTICUT COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUNDS AND \$355,000 IN AMERICAN RESCUE FUNDS TO FINANCE SAID APPROPRIATION**' shall be submitted to the voters of the Town on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, between the hours of 6:00 A.M. and 8:00 P.M. (prevailing time) in the manner provided by the Town Charter and the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended, and the procedures set out in subsection (b)(2) of Section 9-369d of the Connecticut General Statutes, Revision of 1958, as amended, which procedures are hereby chosen and approved in accordance with subsection (b)(1) of Section 1 of said statute. Electors shall vote on the question at their respective polling places. Voters who are not electors shall vote on the question at the Windsor Town Hall. Absentee ballots will be available from the Town Clerk's office.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That said resolution shall be placed upon the voting machines or paper ballots under the following heading:

"SHALL THE TOWN OF WINDSOR APPROPRIATE \$4,355,000 FOR THE WILSON PARK PROJECT AND AUTHORIZE THE USE OF \$4,000,000 IN CONNECTICUT COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUNDS AND \$355,000 IN AMERICAN RESCUE FUNDS TO FINANCE SAID APPROPRIATION?"

Voters approving said ordinance will vote "Yes" and those opposing said ordinance will vote "No." Absentee ballots will be available from the Town Clerk's office.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk is authorized and directed to post and publish notice of said referendum, to be incorporated into the notice of the aforesaid election."

Motion Passed 9-0-0

13) RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS – None

14) MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

- a) Minutes of the January 2, 2024 Regular Town Council meeting

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Naeem to approve the minutes of the January 2, 2024 Regular Town Council meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

15) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor ARMstrong to enter Executive Session at 9:30 p.m. for the purpose of:

- a) Strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims and litigation (Windsor UPSEU - Dispatchers)

Motion Passed 9-0-0

16) EXECUTIVE SESSION

Present: Mayor Nuchette Black-Burke, Deputy Mayor Darleen Klase, Councilor Mary Armstrong, Councilor Ronald Eleveld, Councilor Kristin Gluck Hoffman, Councilor Ojala Naeem, Councilor William Pelkey, Councilor Leroy Smith, and Councilor Walker

Staff: Peter Souza, Town Manager; Scott Colby, Assistant Town Manager; Amelia Bliss, Human Resources Director



Other: Kevin Deneen, Law Firm of O'Malley, Deneen, Leary, Messina & Oswecki

MOVED by Councilor Eleveld, seconded by Deputy Mayor Klase to exit Executive Session at 9:59 p.m. and return to the Regular Town Council meeting.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

17) ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councilor Pelkey, seconded by Deputy Mayor Klase to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Helene Albert
Recording Secretary