



TOWN COUNCIL
HYBRID MEETING – VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON
December 18, 2023
Regular Town Council Meeting
Council Chambers

APPROVED 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

Mayor Black-Burke led the group in prayer/reflection.

3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Black-Burke led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4) PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS

- a) Proclamation honoring Fred Miodowski for his civic engagement

Mayor Black-Burke read the proclamation honoring Fred Miodowski for his civic engagement.

- b) Certificate of Achievement/Appreciation for fire prevention poster contest

Lauri Volkert, Fire Marshal, presented certificates to the 4th and 5th grade students that were runners up and winners of the annual prevention poster contest.

5) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS - None

6) COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilor Naeem gave her congratulations to the ground breaking in the Windsor center that Councilor Smith mentioned. It was a great event. She gave a big thank you to all that participated in Project Santa and the organizations that have collected toys, etc. for the kids. She wished everyone a Happy Holidays and Happy New Year. Please be safe.

Councilor Armstrong attended the ground breaking on December 13th as well. It was a joyful occasion to see Windsor is moving forward. She thanked the town hall members and Peter Souza for helping to manage things around town. This is a time of celebration of holiday but we shouldn't forget those that are not as fortunate as we are. Especially

our elders that are sometimes alone. Just give them a phone call or smile. She's looking forward to hearing from citizens. She wished everyone a Happy Holiday to all those who are celebrating.

Councilor Walker wished everyone a happy holiday. He said 'Jesus is the reason for the season'. Happy holidays however you celebrate and do it safely. Happy New Year as well. He along with many of the councilors attended the Wreaths Across America event and Windsor does a good job remembering our heroes and those who have died and given their lives for our freedom.

Councilor Pelkey said Merry Christmas and happy holidays to whichever holiday you celebrate. If you are looking for a last minute gift, you can give one to the Town of Windsor. The Conservation Commission has an open space fund so citizens can make direct tax deductible contributions to the open space. Just send your check for the open space fund to the attention of the Finance Department at 275 Broad Street.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman wished everyone a wonderful holiday season, a healthy and happy one. Wishing everyone a blessed year.

Councilor Eleveld wished everyone a Happy New Year, Merry Christmas, Happy Chanukah, Happy Kwanzaa or whichever holiday you are celebrating a happy one. It's a difficult time of the year for some especially for those that are alone so please don't hesitate to give them a phone call.

Deputy Mayor Klase said Happy Holidays. She stated the Town of Windsor has many wonderful shops and she has picked up some great items from them. She encouraged people to do some local shopping.

Councilor Smith stated he has been on some of his first assignments attending committee meetings and it's been a pleasure. On December 13th he attended a ground breaking for the proposed Windsor Center project. He also attended his first meeting of the Town Improvements Committee meeting and thanked the Town Manager Souza for his presentation during the meeting. He attended the Finance Committee as well and thanked those that attended and for their presentations.

Mayor Black-Burke said the ground breaking for Founder's Square was phenomenal. Prior Councils that have sat here have helped to bring that to fruition and she applauded them for all their hard work for bringing this to fruition. Wreaths Across America was absolutely tremendous. She attended Windsor High School's choral concert with the award winning choral department. It was great to see the talent that the young people bring to the table under the direction of Dr. Tracee White. Please be safe as you are travelling for the holiday season. Please check in on a neighbor or loved one. She added to please check the town's website as it has many resources available there. There is See Click Fix, information on volunteering on a board/commission, and other resources.

7) REPORT OF APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

a) Public Building Commission

Rich Hazelton, Public Building Commission, gave the following report:

Oliver Ellsworth School Humidity Mitigation Design - 9574

van Zelm Engineers are currently working on the design of the HVAC upgrades. The Dedicated Outside Air Units are being finalized and pre-order should be released within the next two weeks. Bidding for construction is anticipated for February 2024 with construction over the 2024 summer break.

Sage Park Middle School Slab Moisture Mitigation Project

The PBC is currently reviewing the latest proposal provided by Hoffman Architects and Engineers that would evaluate the exterior drainage and groundwater conditions. The PBC hopes to make final recommendation at the next PBC meeting scheduled for January 9, 2024.

Sage Park Middle School Energy HVAC Efficiencies Upgrades Project Phase 2 & 3 - 9542

Work continues to progress and all HVAC equipment is installed and running. Punch list inspection is scheduled for December 27, 2023. Completion of phase two and three is scheduled by end of December 2023.

Aquatic Facilities Improvements Goslee Pool Houses Renovations - 9564

Construction is complete. Items remaining are minor punch list items, which should be completed by the end of December 2023.

Milo Peck School HVAC Construction - 9538

The PBC is waiting further directions from Town Council regarding this project's progression.

Clover Street School Roof Replacement Design Project - 9549

The project design architect, Hibbard & Rosa, has completed the construction and specification drawings. The PBC reviewed the completed drawings. Construction is scheduled for FY 2026.

LP Wilson Community Center HVAC Renovations Project - 9551

Work continues to progress on phase one. Dedicated Outside Air Systems are installed and scheduled for factory startup. Phase one work is expected to be completed by the middle of January of 2024. The PBC expects to bid phase two in the winter of 2024.

330 Windsor Ave. Community Center Gym HVAC Renovations - 9550

The three roof top units are installed and running. The unit economizer control and final graphics need to be completed. The PBC expects the controls to be completed by the end of January 2024.

Design for Clover Street School Restroom ADA Code Compliances - 9552

The PBC reviewed completed drawings at our September 13, 2022 meeting. Hazardous Material testing will be scheduled for winter 2023 and Construction is scheduled for summer 2024.

Design for LP Wilson BOE Restroom Renovations - 9553

The PBC reviewed completed drawings at our September 13, 2022 meeting. Hazardous Material testing will be scheduled for winter 2024 and Construction is scheduled for summer 2025.

Sage Park Middle School Roof Design Project - 9541

The design is substantially complete. This project would replace the remaining 93,000 sq. ft. of roof section that was installed in 1995 and is currently out of warranty. Funding has been approved by the Town Council for the construction portion of this project in the amount of \$2.9M. On October 7th, the BOE has submitted for a Grant from the State of Connecticut, Office of School Construction Grant (OSCG). Waiting for results from the OSCG before proceeding with the next steps.

Poquonock Elementary School Roof Design Project - 9558

The design is substantially complete. The PBC expects to review drawings at one of its spring 2024 meetings. Construction funding is scheduled for FY 2025.

JFK Elementary School HVAC System Upgrades Phase III Project - 1932

Work continues to progress and all HVAC equipment is installed and running. Construction is expected to be completed by the end of December 2023.

Welch Park Pool House Renovations Project -

The PBC approved construction drawings for this project this past fall. Bids have been received and reviewed. We are currently waiting for the GC to provide a copy of their performance and payment bond. Anticipated construction is projected for Winter-Spring of 2024.

Councilor Eleveld said that he had a question about the Oliver Ellsworth HVAC project. Are they putting in new chillers? He thought that the project was bringing in the DOAS units to direct outside air systems or are we getting a new chiller? Mr. Hazelton said he is not aware of our getting a new chiller.

Councilor Smith asked in terms of the Public Building Commission, can he get a review of the roles and responsibilities of the commission? Are there any additional services that you'd like to see the Public Building Commission contribute or get more involved in? Mr. Hazelton said none that he knows of. He said that he'd like to ensure that the money is being spent properly and that the people that are doing the construction have set up guidelines to ensure that they pay their workers and their bills. They sometimes visit sites, have meetings at sites. The last two big projects they worked on was the Police Station and the new fire station. He attended all the weekly meetings for when those projects were going on.

8) TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Souza gave the following report:

Broad Street Road Diet

You're invited to attend a Public Information meeting on Tuesday, December 19, 2023 at 7:00 PM in the **Council Chambers at Windsor Town Hall**, 275 Broad Street, to hear updates on recent and upcoming projects in Town Center as well ask questions and share your input on the proposed Broad Street Road Diet project.

This proposed upcoming project includes the reduction of Broad Street to one travel lane in each direction from Poquonock Avenue (Route 75) to Sycamore Street, the addition of dedicated turn lanes, on street parking, and improved walkability in the town center area. Additional work will include the installation of updated traffic signals to support the proposed lane configuration and pedestrian crossing lengths.

Anyone interested in obtaining further information may do so by contacting the Engineering Department at (860) 285-1861, or by email at engineering@townofwindsorct.com.

Coffee House Concert

The Friends of Northwest Park invite you to join them for another season of Coffee House Concerts.

Join us on Saturday, January 6, 2024 from 7:30 PM – 9:30 PM at the Northwest Park Nature Center to hear the **International String Trio**. They have honed an expansive repertoire embracing nearly a dozen styles from around the world. The trio's riveting performances include Gypsy swing, old-time Appalachian laments, traditional Irish reels, celebratory klezmer, passionate tango, graceful French musette, and burning bluegrass. While steeped in jazz, they play intricately arranged music that leaves room for improvisation without focusing on it.

For more information call 860-285-1886.

Winter, 2024 There's a lot to do In Windsor magazine

The winter edition of *There's a lot to do in Windsor* will be delivered to Windsor residents and businesses together with the Hartford Courant's *Courant Community* newspaper the week of December 25th. This edition covers programs and events for January through April as well as special feature stories, budget and revaluation information. The magazine will also be available on the town's website and at town facilities later this month.

Siting Council Virtual Meeting regarding River Street solar project

The Connecticut Siting Council is holding a virtual meeting via Zoom at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 21, 2023. Item number 7 on the agenda pertains to Petition No. 1598, the proposed solar facility at 445 River Street. The item is administrative in nature and will review the requests for public hearing and the request for party/intervenor status. Here is a link for the meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84413602639?pwd=SytVSG1ZNzdTL0RNQXpjZ2JESnM0UT09>.

Automated Traffic Enforcement – Speed and Red Light Cameras

Town staff has been gathering and reviewing information in anticipation of CT DOT issuing guidance to municipalities related to the new State law allowing for use of automated traffic enforcement safety devices (e.g. traffic cameras) for speeding over 10 miles as well as failure to stop at a red light.

The images captured by these devices include license plate information and the date, time, and location of alleged violations related to 1) speeding of 10 miles-per-hour or more over the posted limit and 2) towns need to follow the provisions set forth by the new law and DOT guidance in order to receive approval to install and activate automated traffic enforcement safety devices. Provisions include items such as adoption of an ordinance, submission of a plan to CT DOT, adoption of a citation hearing procedure, creation of a written policy, and implementation of a comprehensive safety action plan. Prior to submitting a plan to CT DOT, the town needs to conduct a public hearing and the Town Council must vote on the proposed plan.

Fees for violations cannot be more than \$50 for the first violation and no more than \$75 for subsequent violations. Any funds received by the town must be utilized for improving transportation mobility, investing in transportation infrastructure improvements, or paying the costs associated with use of the device or the implementation of such.

DOT guidance is expected in the next several weeks. I expect to bring this topic to the Town Council (hopefully in January) for an overview / introduction and request the Mayor refer the item to the Health and Safety Committee for further review and recommendations to the Town Council.

Deputy Mayor Klase asked if we are able to post the Siting Council meeting and a little description of what it is on the website on the section where we have the solar farm information? Town Manager Souza said his plan is to place the zoom link there.

Mayor Black-Burke stated she wanted to clarify that she heard this correct is that the meeting itself for the solar farm is administrative in scope and there will be discussion about party status. Town Manager Souza stated that was correct.

9) REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Town Improvements Committee – Councilor Smith stated they had a Town Improvements Committee meeting on Monday and they were given information on how projects are brought forth. There are quite a few projects proposed for the next few years. We got a sense of the priorities and spoke of the funding for those projects. They had an overview from the financial advisor about bonds and that was informative.



Finance Committee – Councilor Naeem stated they had a Finance Committee meeting on Wednesday and most of those items are on tonight’s agenda so she will speak of those later on.

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) Approve acceptance of State of Connecticut grant to support cost of early voting

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Pelkey to accept the Connecticut Secretary of the State’s Early Voting grant and authorize the expenditure of grant funds.

Anna Posniak, Town Clerk, stated the Town of Windsor will receive \$10,500. These monies will be used to offset the costs associated with early voting such as labor and training costs, printing of ballot costs, polling location related expenses, voter education or equipment and supplies. All grant funds need to be expended by December 31, 2024 with a one-time extension upon approval of the Secretary of the State’s office. The Town Clerk will oversee the grant application and subsequent reporting requirements.

Below is a table showing early voting time periods by type of election. Early voting is not permitted for local stand alone referendum questions or budget referendums.

Overview of Early Voting Requirements

Overview of Early Voting Requirements Requirement	General Election	Primary	Presidential Preference Primary	Special Election
Start of Early Voting Period	15 days before	8 days before	5 days before	5 days before
End of Early Voting Period	2 days before	2 days before	2 days before	2 days before
Duration of Early Voting	14 days	7 days	4 days	4 days

Councilor Eleveld said \$10,500 is not going to go far. Ms. Posniak agreed with Councilor Eleveld as 2024 is a presidential year.

Councilor Eleveld asked when will Ms. Posniak be coming back to the Council as he presumes she’ll be making a request for funding between now and the end of the year. Ms. Posniak stated that in the FY 24 budget, there was \$4,000 built into the budget for

early voting which will be used with the grant funds. We are in the process of working on the FY 25 budget. She and the registrars will be trying to review the requirements as the Secretary will be coming out soon, which will tell us the number of workers they are expected to have, and the total number of hours that we need to have the early voting polling location open. At that time, we'll have a better idea of what to expect in FY 25.

Councilor Armstrong asked about the dates for early voting. When will that be? Ms. Posniak asked is it for the Presidential Preference Primary? Councilor Armstrong said yes. Ms. Posniak stated that there will be four days in advance of the Presidential Preference Primary. They are March 26, 27, 28 and the 30th. Since that is the week of Easter, there will be no early voting on Good Friday as that is a state holiday and there will be no early voting on that Sunday as Easter is also considered an early voting holiday.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman said thank you for all you do. It's a lot of work and hours you put into it. Ms. Posniak thanked Councilor Gluck Hoffman for the saying that.

Councilor Pelkey stated for clarification we are going to be having voting for the general election, for the Presidential Primary, and any potential special elections. Ms. Posniak interjected she is not aware of any special elections. It would be a special election that arises if someone at the state legislature was to resign or pass away or if we had a probate judge under the same circumstances. That would trigger a special election in the Town of Windsor. We also have a state primary in August that would utilize the early voting as well.

Councilor Pelkey asked about the budget referendum and if there is going to be an early vote? Ms. Posniak responded there would not be.

Mayor Black-Burke wanted to reiterate 'funds used to offset costs.' She stated that there are costs associated with voting, but this will help us to offset those costs. She thanked Ms. Posniak for presenting the item.

Councilor Armstrong thanked Ms. Posniak and the registrar of voters for all their hard work to make sure that everything is going well for the Town of Windsor. We thank you and appreciate you.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

b) Approve Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Parameters

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Pelkey that the attached FY 25 budget assumptions and parameters be approved as presented.

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Assumptions and Parameters

Revenues

Overall State Aid projections will be consistent with FY 24 adopted levels, and adjusted as based on the Governor's budget which will be released in early February.

Building permits, conveyance fees and land recordings are projected to remain level with FY 24 adopted budget amounts.

Interest earnings are anticipated to remain favorable for FY 25. We are estimating a rate of return for FY 25 of approximately 3.5%.

No opening cash will be included as part of the Town Manager's proposed budget, as per the Town Council's June 2021 direction. Alternative scenarios utilizing cash reserves will be presented for consideration.

Expenditures

Employee and retiree insurance benefit self-insured claims and premiums (health, prescriptions, dental, life and disability) are projected to increase approximately 18% (\$690,000).

Town contributions to defined benefit and defined contribution retirement plans are forecasted to increase approximately 3.0% (\$165,000).

Transfer payment to Great Pond Improvement District is expected to increase 120% due to the completion of new private developments and resulting Grand List growth (\$760,000).

Budgeted costs for utilities (electricity, natural gas, water) are forecasted to increase 14% (\$240,000).

Budgeted per gallon costs for gasoline and diesel are expected to increase 3.5% (\$14,000).

MDC sewer ad valorem is expected to increase 1.0% (\$47,000).

General Fund appropriation for debt service is a planned increase of 3% (\$250,000).

Capital spending is forecasted to decrease 19% (-\$680,700). This is related to the Town Council funding a Community Investment Initiative program for FY 24.

No increase in the appropriation for Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB), which is budgeted at \$800,000 in the FY 24 budget.

Continue contribution to the Caring Connection (FY 24 adopted budget \$100,000).

Provide continued financial support to Windsor EMS reflecting an estimated 3% increase (\$20,000).

Service Delivery

In recognition of property revaluation impacts, present a budget that attempts to maintain current levels of service as well as identifies needed resources to address unmet and emerging service delivery needs (e.g., traffic enforcement, workforce development / succession planning, senior transportation, infrastructure maintenance, cyber security, affordable senior and workforce housing). Continue multi-year investment program in open space preservation as well as asset management activities including pavement management, fleet, technology, facilities, athletic fields, and park facilities.

Councilor Naeem gave an overview of what the Finance Committee discussed during their meeting. Some of the key highlights were:

- Net taxable grand list will be increasing about 26% or by \$26 million
- Single family residential properties have an increase of over 50%, condos and planned communities over 42%, and commercial and industrial is expected to increase about 7% overall.
- Grand list will not be completed until January 31st.
- For those looking to appeal any of your assessments you received you have until February 20th to appeal.
- For non-property revenues, we are currently 26% of our current budget. We don't know the level of what our State aid will be until the Governor introduces his budget in February.
- In the expenditures areas where we're seeing a significant percentage increase are town contributions to defined benefits and retirement plans which are expected to increase by 18%.
- Budget costs for utilities are expected to increase by 14%.
- Per a town resolution from 2021, the Town Manager will present a budget to the Town Council that will use no opening cash. That does not mean that we can't use opening cash and we expect that we may be using opening cash as we look at the coming year's budget.

Town Manager Souza stated the date in February for formal appeals before the Board of Assessment Appeals is February 20th.

Mayor Black-Burke said if you didn't come to the hearings that were held a few weeks back, you can still come prior to February 20th to appeal. Town Manager Souza said we refer to them as informal hearings. If you have questions about the assessment notice and evaluation, please contact our Assessor's Office or the consultants that completed the evaluation. They will be able to walk through it with you if you have questions on how they arrived at that valuation. There's also information on the town's website that shows the sales around residential properties which are sales between October 2022 – October 2023.

Town Manager Souza stated that we know revaluation will have an impact. It will be unique to each property but there will be a notable impact. For the Finance Committee discussions, that will be one of the top considerations when staff goes through the budget



process as well as the Town Council. This will be a high factor to consider as we go through the process.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

c) Approve Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Calendar

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Gluck Hoffman that the attached FY 2025 Budget Calendar be approved as presented.

**TOWN OF WINDSOR
FY 25 BUDGET CALENDAR**

DATE	DAY	STEP
February 5, 2024	Monday	Public Hearing by Town Council to hear budget requests from citizens
February 15, 2024	Thursday	Informational meeting on Proposed Budget (<i>hosted by staff</i>)
February 16, 2024	Friday	Board of Education to submit to Town Council information regarding Public Act 13-60 (<i>tentative date</i>)
March 4, 2024	Monday	Town Council suggestions due to the BOE per Public Act 13-60 within 10 days of BOE submission
March 11, 2024	Monday <i>Tentative</i>	Board of Education to submit written responses to Town Council regarding suggestions made per Public Act 13-60.
March 11, 2024	Monday	Finance Committee Meeting (<i>tentative date</i>)
March 27, 2024	Wednesday	Estimated receipts and expenditures submitted to Town Council by Town Manager (proposed budget)
March 28, 2024	Thursday	Informational meeting on Proposed Budget (<i>hosted by staff</i>)
April 1, 2024	Monday	Town Manager's Presentation of FY 25 Proposed Budget Public Hearing re: public opinion regarding budget as proposed by Town Manager Regular Town Council meeting
April 3, 2024	Wednesday	Board of Education, Revenues, Public Works, Landfill Enterprise Fund, Resident Transfer Station Enterprise Fund
April 8, 2024	Monday	Library Services, Health Services, Police Department, Ambulance Services, Fire and Rescue Services
April 15, 2024	Monday	Board of Education, Information Services, Human Services, Recreation & Leisure Services, Child and Adult Day Care Enterprise Funds

April 17, 2024	Wednesday	Development Services, Community Development, Administrative Services, General Government, General Services/Capital Spending, Insurance Internal Service Fund, Town Support for Education
April 23, 2024	Tuesday	Public Comment, Preliminary Deliberations (<i>tentative and may be combined with Final Deliberations</i>)
April 24, 2024	Wednesday	Public Comment, Town Council final deliberations and vote (<i>tentative and may be combined with Preliminary Deliberations</i>)
May 14, 2024	Tuesday	Recommended date for Adjourned Town Meeting (<i>referendum</i>)
May 20, 2024	Monday	Regular Town Council Meeting; Town Council sets tax rate
June 21, 2024	Friday	Tax bill mailing completed
June 30, 2024	Sunday	End of current fiscal year

Note: Windsor School Vacation Week 4/08 – 4/12
Passover (begins at sundown on 4/22/24)

Councilor Naeem said that the Finance Committee discussed the proposed calendar at their meeting. There are two formal informational meetings hosted by the Town Manager and staff scheduled for Thursday, February 15th and Thursday, March 28th. These are informal meetings to provide the residents the opportunity to understand and discuss the budget process and overall outlook for revenue.

Councilor Naeem added that two things to note is that the Finance Committee made two recommendations for changes on the proposed calendar. The first was looking at April 15th and April 17th. Those meetings look very heavy in terms of topics to cover. It is recommended that there be a meeting scheduled for the week of April 8th to the calendar to reduce the number of departments that need to be reviewed on April 15th. That would also allow a space for a follow up session of the Board of Education if needed to happen on April 15th. We realize this is Spring break for Windsor Public Schools, but recognizing that we have a lot to cover this year, we are hoping to have that schedule amended for that week.

Councilor Naeem stated the second change is for Monday, April 22nd. It is being suggested to move it to Tuesday, April 23rd so it does not conflict with the first night of Passover. That meeting will be to hear public comment and have preliminary deliberations by the Town Council.

Councilor Eleveld addressed Town Manager Souza and asked if we checked into the Muslim holiday that might fall during that week? Town Manager Souza stated his take away from the Finance Committee is that they would go forward with this calendar. He apologized in case he misunderstood. Councilor Naeem said no that the Town Manager was spot on and those dates seemed to work. She iterated that Muslim holidays fall on a lunar calendar and are not decided until the evening before.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- d) Approve Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Format

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Eleveld that the FY 25 budget format remain the same as FY 24.

Councilor Naeem said there were no changes to the budget format. The *Town Charter* requires that if there are any changes desired by the Town Council that they be adopted by January 15th.

Councilor Naeem stated the Finance Committee received a pretty detailed format. The Town Manager and team will be presenting American Rescue Funds, grant revenues and expenditures as applicable by departments in the FY 25 budget, and then any associated information on special revenue will be there as well.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- e) Approve Town Council meeting dates for calendar year 2024 and January 2025

MAIN MOTION

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Eleveld to approve the meeting dates for calendar year 2024 and January 2025.

Town Manager Souza stated this follows the Town Council rules that there be a meeting on the first and third Mondays of each month starting at 7:30 p.m. except for the months of July and August and then if Monday is a holiday, that the meeting is to be held the next business day. This reflects that calendar and asks the Town Council to approve this calendar so we can then submit it to the Town Clerk's office per the Freedom of Information Act which requires all agencies to submit a calendar for regular meetings for the following calendar year.

Mayor Black-Burke asked if we looked at Rosh Hashanah and checked this schedule for that holiday? Town Manager Souza stated that we had checked for all major Jewish holidays.

AMENDED MOTION

MOVED by Councilor Pelkey, seconded by Councilor Eleveld to change the schedule starting on January 16, 2024 that all Regular Town Council meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. and that we update the Town Council Rules of Order to incorporate that change.

Councilor Pelkey said he is looking to make the change because he thinks it's in the best interest of the town. We are the only public body in town that has a starting time after 7:00 p.m. He knows that many other boards and commissions start their meetings at 7:00 p.m. He knows the later we go, the less people we have in the room. He doesn't think starting later is helping in the participation in the interest that we have. When he

looks at the Board of Education, they are still able to come to that meeting. He thinks it is something that we can get on page with what the community has historically decided to be 7:00 p.m. or earlier. Personally, he doesn't believe this is a political matter. One of his concerns is town staff. While they are paid to be here, he'd love for them to be able to get home ½ hour sooner.

Deputy Mayor Klase gave an example of tonight. They came in earlier so they could meet with the cub scouts. She added when there's a public hearing, we come in earlier so we can have that. She agrees that the Board of Education starts earlier but they sometimes have their issues where there are special interests but then there are other meetings where no one is attending. Although she understands the motion, for her she thinks that we get more community support and can have more public forums at an hour that people can make comment on.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman piggy backed on Deputy Mayor Klase's comments. She asked Town Manager Souza if having the public meetings earlier are better. Town Manager Souza said that we are able to do those earlier. The only meeting pushed up to a 6:30 p.m. time frame would be a contentious public hearing or a special town meeting. It is doable, it just shifts everything ½ hour earlier.

Councilor Eleveld said in his recollection the Town Planning and Zoning Commission's meeting begins at 7:00 p.m. but there is really no business until 7:30 p.m. Town Manager Souza said they start at 7:00 p.m. and go through the 'housekeeping' work they need to do and the formal actions begin at 7:30 p.m.

Councilor Eleveld said in essence the formal part of the meeting is at 7:30 p.m. He's mixed on this, but he is inclined to vote 'no' to the motion.

Mayor Black-Burke stated in regards to public engagement that as a Council it would behoove us to provide time and space for as many of our citizens to be a part. Usually the bell doesn't toll to get out of work between 5:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m., then you have supper or have to pick up your kids, etc. So if we do have public hearings that are meeting at 7:00 p.m., if we push any earlier, it's already minimal participation. On the flip side of that, all of the Councilors are volunteers. It's the same thing, if by the time the bell tolls and you try to do everything you need to by the 7:00 p.m. deadline, that's 6:30 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. and by the time we begin to get going it's already 7:30 p.m.

Councilor Naeem stated Mayor Black-Burke covered everything she was going to say. For that reason, she is going to vote against the amendment.

AMENDED MOTION

Failed 1-7-1 (Mayor Black-Burke, Deputy Mayor Klase, Councilors Armstrong, Eleveld, Gluck Hoffman, Naeem and Smith against and Councilor Walker abstained)

MAIN MOTION

Passed 8-1-0 (Councilor Pelkey against)

- f) Approve 2024 schedule of Board/Commission annual reports to the Town Council

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Pelkey to approve the 2024 schedule of board/commission annual reports to the Town Council.

Councilor Eleveld asked Town Manager Souza about why there are not boards/commissions slated for a review in February. Town Manager Souza said that we are following the tradition of starting to the boards coming, except for the Metropolitan District Commission, in March.

Councilor Armstrong asked what are the times for the reports to the boards? Town Manager Souza stated they are built into the Regular Town Council agenda per the Council Rules of Order. They would follow the same 7:30 PM start time.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

13) RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS – None

14) MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

- a) Minutes of the December 4, 2023 Regular Town Council

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Pelkey to approve the minutes of the December 4, 2023 Regular Town Council meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

15) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

16) EXECUTIVE SESSION

17) ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councilor Pelkey, seconded by Councilor Armstrong to adjourn the meeting at 9:01 p.m.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Helene Albert
Recording Secretary