



**TOWN COUNCIL
HYBRID MEETING – VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON
February 5, 2024
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

Deputy Mayor Klase led the group in prayer/reflection.

3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Deputy Mayor Klase led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4) PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS

a) Proclamation Honoring Dr. Len Hellerman

Mayor Black-Burke read aloud and presented the proclamation to Dr. Len Hellerman.

5) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Linda Alexander, 155 Fieldstone Drive, is opposed to the resolution on the agenda tonight regarding Israel and Palestine. She thinks that Councilor Ron Eleveld did an excellent job of covering the issues and summing it up when he said, "This topic is beyond the scope of the responsibilities of the Windsor Town Council. We don't deal with foreign affairs in this body. If you have issues with foreign affairs, you need to take those issues to our Senators and congress people. Here at the Town Council we deal with local issues, our budgets, our roads and schools." She is opposed to the resolution and is asking the Town Council to vote 'no'.

Zee Rubin (address not given) is speaking as a member of the Hartford Jewish Organizing Collective and as a member of the Jewish community at large. He understands there are Council members who oppose the pending resolution regarding the ceasefire in Palestine on the grounds that it is not a town issue and how they want to focus on lowering taxes. Any action by the local government will and does have a global impact. He urged every Council member to vote yes for the ceasefire resolution.

Taylor Warinsky, 143 Ford Road, supports the ceasefire resolution regarding Israel and Palestine. He is glad this resolution has been put forward by the Town Council. As the resolution says, the CT Federal delegation and the federal government hold immense diplomatic power to save human lives. He is deeply disturbed by the government's refusal to take concrete steps to safeguard Palestinian lives in the current conflict. He condemns the October 7th attack by Hamas. The disproportionality of Israel's response is shocking and so isn't the Biden administration's failure to ensure that innocent civilians in Palestine are protected. He is proud that the Town Council is taking steps in speaking up on this issue.

Sarwat Patel (spelled phonetically - address not given) said please be on the right side of history and vote for the ceasefire resolution tonight. She can tell us that the suffering that is ongoing is unprecedented and we will look back at this time and wonder why so many chose to be silent. Please do not fall into that category of people that remains silent. She hopes it will be a unanimous yes vote as that will be a statement of the United States citizens as to where we stand. Hostages need to be freed. We need to work towards a solution that is appropriate for 2024. She hopes that all the councilors vote yes for the resolution.

Joel Kent, 33 Hansom Hill Road, stated that war is never good and innocent people die. In his generation, no other picture was more poignant and earth shattering to him than that of a little Vietnamese girl in flames running. In order to negotiate a ceasefire, Israel has come forward and said release the hostages, cease fire. People lose sight of the fact that Israel withdrew everything, all forces, from Gaza in 2005. The accords drawn up at that time gave the Palestinian authorities 95% of what they asked for. They wanted it all. In negotiating with Hamas, you have to realize that the basic premise of Hamas's existence is the total destruction and annihilation of Israel. A free and democratic society created by the United Nations in 1948 and who has fought for their very existence since then. He does not want the Council to support the ceasefire resolution tonight as we have no business getting involved with international politics.

Kathryn Grimshaw Parker, 166 West Street, said she is in support of the ceasefire resolution for Israel and Palestine which will hopefully aid in communicating to the State government the will of the people. She has spent thousands of hours of her life away from her family, specifically her young child volunteering for this community. As the organizer for the Northwest Park Country fair, an event that services about half the active voters of this town for the 2023 election, as the Vice President of the Windsor Education Foundation, which provides \$10-\$15,000 annually to the educators of the children of this town each year, providing grants that service on average hundreds of students, and as someone who has lived in this community most of her life, she thinks it's clear that she has the right to comment on the elected officials, who have been placed in their positions of power by the people. The roles she holds in this community are privileges. They provide me with a certain level of power. Because of that she has spent thousands of hours of thinking how to serve this community. She continued to express her values and what attributes she as a person has when it comes to serving the community and how

she expects other persons in that position to do the same. She hopes that her elected officials are driven by humanity.

Ryan Parker, 166 West Street, stated there is nothing complicated about this resolution and call for ceasefire unless you complicate it. He verbalized his anger and irritation with some of the words and remarks made by Councilor Eleveld at the last Council meeting. He feels Councilor Eleveld represented Windsor in a careless one-sided, untruthful manner and that he felt that he held the high, mighty position of being the one who could define genocide. He went on to define the words ignorance, weakness, pessimism, favoritism and oppression directing them towards Councilor Eleveld. He stated if there were actually an oppression, the darkness of us would win every time and he refuses to wait for the Israeli government's intent to match its impact, which it surely will if we do not call for a ceasefire now. There is nothing that can come of people coming together locally to have an impact globally. That's what the oppressor wants us to believe right now because then things can stop being uncomfortable. He calls for a ceasefire now.

Basil Anagar (spelled phonetically), 56 Lemon Road (address not clear), West Hartford, stated this is an issue for everybody. We have Hispanics leading this movement. We have African Americans leading with Buddha. We have Caucasians, Asians leading this movement. Why is that? It is because we are not free until we are all free. Palestinians are our family too. They are our blood. We are all Palestinian, and how we stand, because we're not asking you to choose between political stances. We are not asking you to choose between religious views or to choose between Palestinians. We are asking whether you support humanity. We're asking you to choose whether you want to see violence or peace and to choose between good and evil. This is an issue of people. He visited Palestine a couple of years ago and they took him in and loved him. They took care of him not because he was Palestinian but because he was human. He continued to give examples of humanity and how we are all one people. He is asking that the Council choose humanity and they approve the ceasefire resolution tonight.

Erica Peterson, 52 Bloomfield Avenue, said we need to address that this is our problem too. We have Pratt & Whitney down the road from us and other companies that are being used to fund this genocide and kill innocent people and that's not what the Town of Windsor that she lives in is like. She asked that the Council consider that and human lives and approve the ceasefire resolution.

Marci Talpoetic (spelled phonetically - did not state address) said when you're going through something in life, it's the people that come together to heal. We need a lot of healing. It's hard to sit when people are losing their lives. It's the people. People come together. It's sad that people are losing their lives over nonsense. If you know your history, what is the foundation and who was there first? That's the truth. You can't fight the history and the truth. She is for the ceasefire.

Hillary Carpenter, 45 Bradford Drive, urged the Council to support the resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire in Israel and Palestine and return of the hostages. It might seem like a stretch for a Town Council from a small town to be involving itself into such

a far off and international conflict that is not taking place in our community, but it is very relevant to Windsor. It is relevant because of the people in this room that live in Windsor who are from the Middle East and who have loved ones still in the Middle East who are affected by this conflict. It is relevant to every person in this town that pays taxes. Their hard working tax dollars being used to fund atrocities that our closest allies have criticized and condemned. The children of Israel and Palestine deserve your attention, support and your voice. Please do not choose silence at this time. She begs the Council to not be silent.

Hoseim (spelled phonetically - did not say last name) from 9 Robin Road, said that as a 16 year old student he shouldn't be here tonight demanding that his representatives vote for a permanent ceasefire and stop sending our tax dollars to a foreign country, when our school and transportation departments are poorly funded. He should be studying for his test and doing his homework, but he's here instead. He's Syrian who has family in Gaza and Syria. He's had 35 family members killed in Gaza, Palestine since October the 7th and he's had his whole country of Syria destroyed by the US Army. That's 35 innocent lives lost, half of which are children. He is a 16 year old doing the job of his representatives demanding a permanent ceasefire. Since October 7, 2023, 1,400 Israelites have been killed compared to 30,000 Palestinians. You cannot tell him this is a war when in fact it is a genocide against the native Palestinians by the Zionist terrorist state of Israel.

Sean Doolittle, 82 Robin Road, said this is a pretty simple resolution calling for peace and an end to violence. If you as my elected officials cannot publicly call for an end of violence or peace, then you are lost. He is in support of the ceasefire resolution.

Josh Houze, 96 Cinnamon Springs, South Windsor, is a veteran from the US Army. He knows firsthand the amount of destruction that US weapons are capable of inflicting. Those weapons are being used right now in Palestine to destroy homes, to destroy hospitals and families and they have no right to do so. We need to support a ceasefire. The United States has the power to demand a ceasefire and it can start at the local level of government by putting pressure on other authorities to do so too. We can stop killing children and people with United States weapons. Please vote yes for a ceasefire.

Bulaong Ramaz-Hall, 26 Chamberlain Street, New Britain, stated she spent her formative years in Windsor as a student at Saint Gabriel's school. She asked if the Town Council should consider foreign affairs or shouldn't be focused on the budget. If she could simply answer the question, it is yes to both, and no individual, organization or political party should be silent right now because in our silence is complicity. We know that the voices of those calling for justice, for life, for peace is necessary. It is necessary for the preservation of our souls and our ability to build a world where we can be in a right relationship with each other. It is why we will not wait for the death toll of the Palestinian people to reach a number to which op-ed authors find suitable in order to refer to it as a genocide. She spoke of Councilor Eleveld and the phrase he used, "if you kick a bear, you need to expect to be bit" and how that made her angry. If the rationale is that the October 7th Hamas attack on Israel, killing 1,200 people justifies the violence

the Palestinian people are facing right now, let's say you then, would be a sufficient response. For the 75 years the Palestinian people have been spent being kicked, humiliated and murdered with the civilian death toll for passing 25,000 in just the last 4 months. She continued to speak about us all being humans. No political body should be silent right now. Our silence is complicity. She would like the Council to say yes to the resolution. She demands a ceasefire.

Cora Lee Jones, 1171 Matianuck Avenue, finds this Council has lost control of this meeting. Any other times that we have had meetings, people have not been allowed to comment, to clap. She'd like the Council to think about that. She noticed that when we stood to do the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag, that many people did not stand to say the pledge. They are pledging Allegiance to the Palestinian flag, but they are here. America is providing a safer place. War is horrible and always has been. We want people to come to America. If you succeed, America succeeds.

Belaal Suleiman, 70 White Rock Drive, called for a ceasefire. You can't have a war on occupation as an occupation is occupied. If anyone can't cooperate, cease fire, I think. you just don't like Palestinians, and you may be a racist. There's just no other way. We're not calling for a war, we're calling for a ceasefire. If you can't call for a ceasefire and there is no other way, then you're just a racist. He called for a ceasefire.

Youness Bakr, 92 Pierce Boulevard, addressed the idea that it's not the Town Council's place to vote for this type of resolution. He belongs to several groups that are in contact with our federal representatives. I've been a witness to hundreds and thousands of people across this country that have marched when the fact of the matter is, our politicians simply are not listening. He said our government has been corrupted and infiltrated by a foreign lobbyist organization. Out of 435 congress people, 420 have consistently voted in favor of Israel. If you are racist and don't want to vote for this, fine. But vote for it because you love your country. He asked the Town Council vote yes for this resolution because they value democracy.

Shahana Malik, 246 Kenswick Lane, wanted to correct what the first speaker said in public comment starting with his assertion about Israeli government positions are not backed by facts. Israeli ministers have repeatedly called for eliminating Palestinians. We need to be on the side of humanity and justice for all. We need to raise our voice for peace. We need to have a ceasefire now.

David Baram, (did not state address) Bloomfield, said when we talk about an issue like tonight with the resolution, passions can be raised and it's sometimes difficult to discuss the complexity of these issues. He believes we can all agree that we are here to support humanity and to support the betterment of all people including the Palestinians and Gaza. However, this resolution while it recognizes the fact that we need to support and recognize the sanctity of life, when it calls for an immediate and permanent ceasefire, it doesn't recognize that to have a ceasefire you need both parties coming to an agreement to cease all acts of violence. Hamas has violated every ceasefire and they have put Israelis as well as their own Palestinian residents in danger. They have embedded

themselves in civilian hospitals and schools. They fired missiles from those locations as well. In order to have an immediate ceasefire, Hamas would have to agree to recognize Israel, to live in co-existence with the Israeli people and to treat their own people, the Palestinians with dignity and respect, giving them freedom. But that's not the goal or aim of Hamas.

Lorinda Ahaar (spelled phonetically), 77 Tracy Drive, Manchester, stated that display of white supremacy that we saw two speakers ago, is the exact display of supremacy that Zionism is rooted in. That display of racism, to imply the folks here are not American and that woman, or whiteness, white people, white supremacy is what allowed me to be here. She is an American citizen. It is that exact display of racism that expects display, whether it is anti black racism or anti Palestinian racism, all systems of oppression are linked. A vote against the ceasefire is not about the fact that it is not relevant to local politics or it has nothing to do with Windsor. It is about that exact white supremacy and exact racism that is so deeply rooted in our society that we are debating about the end of violence. If we want to talk about violating, let's talk about Israel violating 75 years of international law. We can have this conversation over and over again, but what we just heard was disrespectful to every single person in this room. She doesn't have to be a resident of Windsor to call out racism, or white supremacy. She added 'ceasefire now.'

Sasha Zoldesi (spelled phonetically), resident of West Hartford, and member of the Hartford Jewish Organizing Collective thanked the Council for the resolution and urged the Council to pass the ceasefire resolution this evening. She feels her safety is connected to Palestinian safety. The actions of the Israeli government are only making the world less safe for Jewish people, not more. That includes the hostages. She added that local government is where changes first occur. Presenting and passing the resolution tonight would signal to our national legislators and the President there is a need to speak up for humanity and demand a cease fire. This is a matter of humanity. She concluded with a saying that came out of the Nazi genocide which is 'never again as now.' She is for the ceasefire.

Maria Chemia (spelled phonetically), South Windsor, corrected David Baram's observations about the Palestinian's Charter. The Hamas Charter was updated in 2017. It clearly talks about the Palestinian's right to self-determine and does not call for annihilation of Israel but asks that occupation and apartheid be ended. And what's happening over there is also a part of the bigger picture that should also be taken into this. Also it is good that you have brought up this ceasefire resolution. And I think, if you think of humanity and passed this, it's going to be good to influence other towns around. This is how we will slowly grow this movement. She feels it's a good ceasefire resolution and the Town Council should support it.

Kelly Shlavock (spelled phonetically), 96 Simmons Springs, (did not state town) said in your prayer, you prayed for the strength to lead with inclusivity. These are the ideals that you all want to hold yourselves accountable to. According to the Cambridge dictionary, inclusivity is the fact of including all types of people things or ideas, and treating them all figuratively and equally. Fairness and equality cannot exist in the context of Israel's

genocide and colonialism. Fairness and equality cannot exist in the context of Israel's denial of aid and imposition of a humanitarian crisis on the people of Palestine. You all have the unique opportunity to contribute to your own answering of your own prayer today by voting for a ceasefire in Palestine.

Kalir Mecmon (spelled phonetically), 11 Donna Lane, said that he just wanted to push back on one of the main sentiments opposing this resolution, which is that this is not relevant on the local level to Windsor residents. Right here in Windsor we have a very diverse community. Windsor is an international community with many nationalities. I and so many other people here are immigrants or children of immigrants growing up in Windsor and going to Windsor public schools. I had classmates who were refugees, fleeing air strikes in Yemen. I had classmates who were immigrants who moved from all over the world to the state of Connecticut to the Town of Windsor, to pursue a better life, so to say, that this is not relevant to us on a local level is absurd. The Town of Windsor and our residents feel the effects of international policy on a very personal level. The failure to pass this resolution will have just as much of an impact on this Council's legacy as calling a ceasefire will. He'd like to see Windsor on the right side of history. He is for the ceasefire.

Thaslima Thamanna, 20 Peddler Drive, said we are all watching a live genocide happening. Two-thirds of the 30,000 people killed so far since October 7th have been women and children. What are you going to tell your children when they open up the history books and they read about this genocide? My partners, everyone I know in my community, were out with families raising funds for children in Ukraine when the war broke out. And here we are today speaking about the children of Gaza and we stand silent. Are we really showing you stand for justice? For all this is beyond a political issue. It is a humanitarian issue. These issues impact our families and your children are watching. Let's embody what that means tonight. She is proud to be part of a town that is diverse, open and who cares about the people. That's what made her move from NYC 5 years ago. Small steps matter. She ended by saying 'ceasefire now.'

Raj Shekaun (spelled phonetically), 25 Colton Street, student at Windsor High School, stated Israel is flooding the earth with salt water which will prevent food from growing as it will pollute the soil of the ground. There are already so many civilians starving there. There are about two million civilians in Reza and half of them are children. These children are starving to death and Israel is preventing more food from growing over there forever. There are those that are younger than herself that are having heart attacks. She read a quote from Malcolm X that still applies today. He said, "The press is so powerful in its image making role, it can make the criminal look like he's a victim and make the victim look like he's a criminal. This is the press, an irresponsible press. It will make the criminal look like he's the victim and the victim look like he's he criminal and if you aren't careful the newspapers will have you hating the people who are being oppressed and loving the people who are doing the oppressing."

Suah (spelled phonetically) 9 Robin Road gave a speech. She is from Reza and her mother is from Damascus, Syria. She would love to go back to her countries of Syria and

Palestine, but unfortunately, she can't due to the American and Israeli army bombing and destroying both of her countries. She was one of the people who didn't stand up for the pledge due to the reason that she feels like this government, local, State and Federal are no longer representing her and her peers. Instead the terrorist colonial state of Israel has violated multiple cease fires, whether it's been to show on the media or not. Jews, Muslims, and Christians have lived in Palestine in the Middle East in harmony for centuries before the West invaded the Middle East for their own interests. Israel has pushed over around 2 million people into the area of a hundred 40 square miles. That's smaller than all counties in Connecticut. She is demanding that this Council acts like human beings and calls for a permanent ceasefire.

Aparnah (spelled phonetically – last name not given), 5 Cherry Brook Road, Kensington, wanted to thank everyone that came out tonight and for taking the time to talk to the Council. You've asked us to be polite, respectful, and listen when other people are speaking. I think it's very disrespectful that a couple of you have been having side conversations while people are speaking and standing up here, and while their voice shakes, trying to get their opinion. If you are talking, you are not listening and that is not fair at all. While you hear the rest of the speakers, while you listen to what previous people have said, please listen with an open mind and heart. You don't lose anything by calling for a ceasefire. You just help everybody.

Mohammed Isabel, (spelled phonetically) Enfield, stated he wanted to speak about the first speakers. In 2005 there was not a withdrawal by Israel as long as there was a blockade for 16 plus years. This means you control the place and control what goes in and out. These people have grown up. He is 22 years old and these people have grown up for 16-17 years of their life in a blockade. You can imagine how that would have felt. He corrected the person that spoke about getting 95% of what the Palestinians asked for from the Oslo accords they got. They didn't. The state of Palestine does not exist and that was probably the biggest thing that they wanted to get out of Oslo. He continued by stating that at the last Town Council meeting there was a member that mentioned that the Town Council doesn't have much of a role with federal or foreign policy, which could be true to some limit. He doesn't fully believe that. If you care about humanity here and you care about the constituents here, you're going to care about humanity abroad. If you choose one over the other, that is hypocrisy. We are against the death of any innocents. Supporting this ceasefire resolution will show those in Windsor that you're not a hypocrite and that you are actually someone who cares about humanity here just as you do abroad.

Juliane Davy (spelled phonetically), Jewish resident of Hartford, but she used to live in Windsor a few years ago. She is a member of the Hartford Jewish Organizing Collective. As a Jewish person, she wants to emphasize one point. We nor you get to genocide gate keep. The holocaust is not the only genocide that may have coined the term genocide. But it was not the first systematic erasure and mass murder of people, and it certainly has not been the last. Over 30,000 people were murdered over four months – is that not a genocide. This is a genocide. Entire bloodlines have been erased from the census. After the holocaust we said 'never again'. Does 'never again' mean nothing? We each

have a moral obligation to do any and everything to prevent the genocide of the Palestinian people. Please vote yes for a ceasefire now.

Elmo, 123 Sesame Street, stated he is addressing Senator Blumenthal and Senator Murphy while speaking. I have a few questions for them. He asked what brand of pillows do you use? Because I want to know how you're able to comfortably sleep, knowing that your actions have led to deaths of over 27,000 Palestinians. Also he is really curious, what's the best bank to use to house the millions you've received from Apac and the Israel lobby. Lastly, I'd like to ask what brand of soap do you recommend for washing blood off of your hands.

Aliza Fu (spelled phonetically), resident of West Hartford, is 16 years old and is here tonight instead of focusing on her studies and coming here to speak about this problem. She shouldn't have to speak to adults about this problem and speak up for Palestinians when millions have been speaking up for them already. She wanted to address the notion that 'this is not our problem, it's a Palestinian or Arabian problem'. She's an American citizen. She was born in Hartford Hospital and has lived in West Hartford her entire life. This is not just a Palestinian or Muslim problem. This is our problem. This problem affects communities killing our brothers and sisters as humans. We cannot turn a blind eye as taking a blind eye is not taking a stance. She is for the ceasefire.

Irshad Ahmed, 120 Pierce Boulevard, said he loves the Town of Windsor. He is a practicing physician who has been practicing for the last 30 years. What bothers him is that there has been the death of over 25,000 innocent civilians and the deaths of 11,000 children. There has been 600 health care worker deaths in this war. He is worried about the trauma that these children who have survived and lost their limbs and witnessed such horror. What kind of life will they live? Think about that before you vote. There are still more than 150 hostages taken away from their families. There are also thousands and thousands of hostages in the custody of the Zionist state. He is for the ceasefire and asked the Town Council to not disappoint him and his family and to vote yes for the ceasefire.

6) COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilor Naeem thanked everyone that came out tonight to voice their opinions no matter what it was. It is important that you voice your concerns. The current crisis greatly impacts our community. Windsor is a very diverse community. It is crucial that we recognize that the ongoing conflict not only inflicts immediate harm to those affected abroad but it also reverberates locally impacting our own community members with direct ties and loved ones in the region. By advocating for an end to the violence and for peace in the region, we actively contribute to safe guarding physical and emotional welfare of individuals who are enduring consequences, fostering a sense of sheer humanity that transcends geographic boundaries. Calling for the end of violence calls for an imperative step in preserving the dignity and well-being of both our neighbors abroad and our own community members here in the neighborhood of Windsor. It reinforces the inter-connectiveness of our global and local communities. She stated it is restaurant week

here in Windsor which is being sponsored by First Town Downtown. You can go to their website to see which businesses are participating and the restaurant of the day being promoted. Take a selfie to enter in the contest to win a gift card to one of the restaurants. The Human Relations Commission is now accepting applications and nominations to the Phenomenal Women of Windsor award.

Councilor Walker thanked everyone for coming out and voicing their opinions. He does not think it is fair when people from the audience attack people sitting on the dais. It's not fair to label people as white supremacist. People have a right to voice their opinion. There is always more than one side to an issue. It takes two people to fight. When you have different groups with different opinions, you mediate. Only mediation is going to end this horror, death and chaos. People that need to do that are sitting in Congress. There have been several votes in the House and in the Senate and its almost unanimous nobody is asking for anything except to protect Israel. Those are the people that represent us. They're the ones that need to change it.

Councilor Pelkey stated he doesn't think there is a person in the room that would like to see the continuation of conflict. He added we have a wide variety of openings on boards and commissions. If you want to help out your community, the Windsor fire department is always looking for volunteers. If interested you can go to www.windsorfire.org for more information. You can also email any of the Councilors or the Town Manager and they will give you the information you need.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman said one of the great things we have in town is the Windsor Arts Center. They just had an exhibit, 'Unveiled Silence'. If you have an opportunity to go, it is an amazing exhibit to see.

Councilor Eleveld stated the Department of Transportation did a program about two weeks ago on the restructuring of our highway system. It was interesting and it will be a 30 year project. Some small portions of Windsor might be affected. He added that he is in favor of the ceasefire. He believes both sides have to stop the fighting and try to figure out a way to get to peace. He is calling on our federal officials to act on this issue. He appreciates the passion but America is a free country and he is able to state his opinion. As an American everyone should defend this right. That's what America is about, the right to have a different opinion and voice it.

Councilor Armstrong is happy to see everyone this evening. She stated there was a Health & Safety Committee meeting held on January 29th. It was a productive meeting. They were presented with statistical information that detailed police interventions and updates from July 2023 to December 2023. There are no major crimes to report for the town. Larson has increased in terms of looking at today's economics which was from stores and cars. Traffic violations and profile of stops are being monitored. The most travelled areas they observed was on Route 159, Route 218, areas of Day Hill Road and Poquonock area which is highly travelled. 2,588 stops were made and 60.5% were from speeding and 29.9% were Windsor residents. The Police Department continues to use the license plate identity system which has assisted in retrieving auto theft and other

preventive crimes as well as other cameras in certain areas. These monitoring devices helped to capture and resolve crime activity for our town. Medical calls are frequent. The Police Department is trained to respond with medical awareness to assist our residents in EMS and they are experienced in CPR as well as mental health issues. There were 394 mental health calls. The police are the first to respond to those. Although they are not medical doctors, they are trained to assist in areas that require immediate attention.. The Police Department is in the process of creating a website that will entail particular information as to the town's activities in certain areas. There was also discussion for the need of a medical van that would be used specifically for crime scenes. Currently, they are using a refurbished ambulance. Training and recruitment of officers was discussed during the meeting as well. There are currently some openings for officers and dispatchers. Please remember to take care of yourselves. Please continue to reach out with your concerns. She stated that, 'Hatred is a disease.'

Deputy Mayor Klase thanked everyone that came out tonight. She noted that Councilor Smith, Councilor Armstrong, and Mayor Black-Burke all supported the resolution as well. She was able to attend the group walk, led by Patrick McMahan, Town of Windsor, and Ken Fredette, First Town Downtown, around the Windsor Center. It was interesting to hear their perspective and to see where the Riverwalk is going to go. They got to go into the work space where they talked a lot about different activities that are planned and the new development that is going in the center of town.

Councilor Smith said he attended two events this month. The first was the Black Inventions exhibit at Sage Park Middle School which provided him with a marvelous history lesson on the contributions of black inventors to our society. He encourages everyone to go to this event next year. He also attended the 'Bridges of Belonging' which was a history inclusion project at the Windsor Historical Society. He learned a lot about the history of Windsor. He encourages all to visit the Historical Society to see what they have to offer.

Mayor Black-Burke thanked everyone for coming out this evening. As was stated several times during public comment, respect is important. She doesn't have to agree with what a speaker is saying but she does need to be respectful of what is being shared and allow that individual to have their space to share. She will wait to speak about the resolution until later on in the agenda. On January 27th, Team Paragon and First Robotics had a great convening at Windsor High School. It was good to see the students out and doing their work. She conveyed that it would be wonderful if all the people in the room could visit the Windsor Historical Society to see their new exhibits. They are excellent exhibits that speak to Windsor's history. There are many untold stories that are now being told about our town. She congratulated Dr. Hellerman on his proclamation he received tonight.

7) REPORT OF APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

a) Board of Education

Leonard Lockhart, Board of Education, stated the following:

- The BOE will hold its final Public Forum on the 2024-2025 proposed budget on Tuesday, February 7 at 6:00 PM in the LPW Board Room and the public is invited to comment on the proposed budget at that time. At the conclusion of the public public forum, the Finance Committee will meet to review the proposed budget. The meeting will be aired on the WIN-TV Educational Channel, Comcast Channel 95 or Frontier Channel 6103. Please see the district website for meeting agendas which include Zoom meeting links as well as other alternative ways to view or listen to BOE meetings.
- The superintendent's office is sponsoring *A Discussion on VA Benefits for U.S. Veterans* with Veterans Service Officer Devon Julian leading the discussion on Wednesday, February 7 at 5:00 PM at LPW. Please visit the district website to register for the event.
- The next regular meeting is Wednesday, February 21 at 7:00 PM in the LPW Board Room. It is anticipated that the BOE will vote on the 2024-2025 budget at this meeting. In addition, a representative from van Zelm Engineers will be present at the meeting to discuss the design plan for the Oliver Ellsworth Humidity Mitigation program. The meeting will be held via Zoom and in person in the LPW Board Room. The agenda will be posted on the district website.
- At their January 17 meeting, the BOE approved the academic school calendars for 2024-2025 and 2025 and 2026. The calendars may be viewed, and printed from, the district website. Click on the "calendar" tab to view/print. Also at the January 17 meeting, the Board of Education approved a change to the fees associated with AP classes for next year. For the 2024-2025 school year, all students who enroll in an AP course must take the AP exam in May and will be required to pay the College Board's AP Exam fee for \$98 per exam (\$53 per exam for students who qualify for free/reduced lunch). Students/families that are facing financial hardships or who may have difficulty paying their exam fee may reach out to their counselor for further assistance.
- Dr. Hill is hosting a Coffee Talk on Tuesday, February 27 from 6:00-7:00 PM in the Board Room at L.P. Wilson Community Center. Please RSVP by visiting the district website at www.windsorct.org.
- There will be no school for students on Tuesday, February 6 for professional development for teachers. Later in the month, students and teachers will have no school for Presidents' Day break, February 19 and 20. School offices and district offices will be open on Tuesday, February 20.
- Please remember to check our website, www.windsorct.org, for the most updated information, athletic schedules and academic calendar. Snow day information will be located on a banner on the website as soon as possible if inclement weather should affect the school day. In addition, the district will send out a communication about schools being closed, delayed or early dismissal through our notification

system. Families should make sure their child's school has their most up-to-date contact information.

Deputy Mayor Klase asked what kind of advertisements are going to be done for the public for the proposed Board of Education budget and the public hearing that is coming up on it. Mr. Lockhart stated they've asked the Superintendent to utilize all social media aspects and any type of communication protocols that he may have at his disposal to try and foster participation. No matter how much we invite individuals to come out, they don't come out. They will continue to do their work to come before the Council and present a budget to be approved.

8) TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Souza gave the following report:

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

Please note you need to sign-up in advance with the Siting Council to speak during the 6:30 p.m. public comment session. Information on how to sign up can be found at this link https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/CSC/3_Petitions-medialibrary/Petitions_MediaLibrary/MediaPetitionNos1501-1600/PE1598/HearingDocs/PE1598-zoominstructions_a.pdf

Eversource Tree Removal and Pruning

Eversource has a regular ongoing program to complete tree trimming and a removal program. The goal of the program is to assist in maintaining reliable electrical service and to protect the power distribution infrastructure network. Here is a link to Eversource's webpage for more information on their overall program. <https://www.eversource.com/content/ct-c/residential/outages/avoiding-an-outage/tree-trimming/why-eversource-trims-trees>.

In 2024 Eversource plans to conduct tree trimming and pruning work in Rainbow and Poquonock areas of town. They anticipate beginning this work later this month and through the spring/summer.

The tree trimming and removal program is regulated by the Public Utility Regulatory Authority (PURA).

- When trees or vegetation are located on town property or in the town's right of way, the town's Tree Warden has the authority to determine the scope and method of vegetation management. The CT DOT has that authority when the vegetation is on State property or ROW.
- On private property, only the property owner may give consent for the work unless it is deemed an immediate threat (e.g. tree branches are touching wires.) A home owner can request information / consultation, object to the planned work, or request a modification of the work.
- On Town property, trees must be posted for removal 10 days before removal unless they are in contact with an energized wire or are determined to be in such a hazardous condition they need to be removed. If a tree is being removed on Town property, the utility company must notify the abutting property owners.
- On State property if a tree is over 18" and is selected for removal, the municipality must be notified. This provides the opportunity for the town to review and discuss the selection.

EV Charging Station

The EV Charging Station at the Broad Street & Maple Street Municipal Parking Lot is now online and available for use.

Multifamily Rehabilitation Grant Program (ARF-Funded)

In late 2022 the Town Council approved the use of \$375,000 in American Rescue Funds for a Multi-Family Housing Rehabilitation program. The program has been well received with 18 fully complete applications in various stages of completion.

- three projects are fully completed
- eight are in construction phase
- six are in quote/contract evaluation phase
- one is awaiting final financing approval from Windsor Federal Savings.

The 18 projects represent 44 units of improved housing, with a minimum 50% of units being rented to low or moderate income persons.

Between all projects completed and in progress, staff is forecasting approximately \$600,000 in construction activity. Approximately \$320,000 being funded through town grants and approximately \$275,000 in private matching funds. The majority of applicants are utilizing their own funds toward the required match with two owners working with Windsor Federal who agreed to partner with the town on this important housing

preservation program. Improvements mainly include electrical upgrades, roofing, and boiler, furnace, and window replacements.

At this point, Community Development staff is no longer accepting new applications and has started a waiting list to ensure there are sufficient funds for all applicants. There is currently one applicant on the waiting list.

Town Offices Closed

All Town Offices will be closed on February 19, 2024 in observance of President's Day.

Town Clerk's Office Annual Marriage License Tradition Continues

The Windsor Town Clerk's office is offering free marriage licenses on Wednesday, February 14th in honor of Valentine's Day for any couple wanting to get married in Windsor within the next 65 days. This is an annual tradition which began in 1962 by Town Clerk, George Tudan. To obtain a free marriage license, couples are required to make an appointment with the Town Clerk's office. Both parties must be present for the appointment and need to bring a photo identification. In addition, each couple will be eligible to win a beautiful gift basket filled with assorted gift items, which have been donated by our generous local Windsor merchants.

For those who wish to marry on Valentine's Day, a Justice of the Peace will be available all day; however, prior arrangements must be made with the Justice of the Peace. For details, call the Town Clerk's office at 860-285-1902 or visit the Town of Windsor's website at www.townofwindsorct.com

Windsor Police Cadets

We are currently seeking Police Cadets. Are you between 11 and 20 years old? Are you interested in community service, law enforcement, or making new friends? If so, the Windsor Police Cadets might be right for you. For more information and to check them out go to www.windsorpolicecadets.org or contact Sergeant Bernard Petkis at petkis@townofwindsorct.com.

Budget Informational Workshop – February 15th

On February 15th at 6:30 p.m., town staff will host an informational meeting concerning the FY 2025 budget process as well as property revaluation. The hybrid meeting will be in-person at Town Hall at 275 Broad Street or via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89032680672> via computer with webinar ID # **890 3268 0672** or via phone at **301 715 8592** with webinar ID #**890 3268 0672**.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman asked what time is the informational meeting? Town Manager Souza said it is at 6:30 p.m.

Councilor Walker stated now that the charging station is back, is there a cost to it? Town Manager Souza said that yes, there is a cost. The Town Council had established a fee that covers the power. There might be a time limit on that. He will get back to the Town Council on the fee.

Councilor Eleveld said that he thought it was a low voltage charger when it was originally put in. Have they updated the voltage? Assistant Town Manager Colby said it is the same style of charger that was there when it was initially installed which he believes is a Level two. So it is not a rapid charger.

Councilor Pelkey stated when we're hiring and using the lawyer for the River Street power plant, that is not to help any individuals that live in that area, but rather we are preserving the interests of the town so that in 25-30 years we won't have a problem down the road. It's to preserve the interests of the town and not to work with anyone individually, correct. Town Manager Souza said yes, we are looking to protect the interests of the town. There are questions we are asking regarding the ultimate decommissioning of that facility and what kind of fiscal assurances there are. There are some elements of the project that will speak to buffers, noise, and the various sight lines that we've asked information for and presenting those in our review of the overall plan.

Councilor Pelkey said he had a meeting with Vision Government Solutions regarding his property revaluation. He is curious if the Town Manager has any data now or in the future that he can share. He has been asked by several people and they have not seen much movement to the letter they received last month. Town Manager Souza said they will talk about that during the agenda item that is coming up. However, he believes there were over 400 property owners that did come through that process and 240 or so had some adjustments.

9) REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Town Improvements Committee – Councilor Smith – nothing to report.

Finance Committee – Councilor Naeem stated there is an upcoming Finance Committee meeting on February 12, 2024 at 4:00 PM.

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

Health and Safety Committee – Councilor Armstrong – stated during Communications from Council members.

Personnel Committee – Deputy Mayor Klase said the Personnel Committee has held two meetings and interviewed a number of candidates. We will be bringing them forward to the Town Council along with a number of reappointments.

Councilor Pelkey asked for a number of vacancies on the boards and commissions. Deputy Mayor Klase stated she doesn't have it right now, but she can supply him with that information later.

Councilor Pelkey asked what's the best avenue for those individuals that are interested to apply? Deputy Mayor Klase said the best way to apply is online at www.townofwindsorct.com.

10) ORDINANCES - None

11) UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a) Approve 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."

TABLE ITEM

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Eleveld to table item 11a, to approve 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."

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- b) Approve 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 Naeem to approve 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 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.

Town staff and the design firm, BSC Group, conducted a multi-channel approach to securing input on the design and proceeded to develop construction plans and bid 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.

This project is in the current fiscal year's Capital Improvements Program (CIP), with a preliminary cost estimate of \$4,500,000. Based on project bids received, the remaining project costs are now estimated to be \$4,355,000 including inspection, construction administration and contingency. The project cost elements are as follows:

Construction	\$3,700,000
Inspection/Admin	145,000
Contingency	<u>510,000</u>
Total	\$4,355,000

It is recommended the project be fully funded through use of \$4,000,000 in Connecticut Community Investment Grant funds and \$355,000 in Federal American Rescue Funds (ARF). The State funds are through a reimbursement grant and the town will make periodic reimbursement requests.

In July 2022 the Council allocated \$500,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funds towards the project. \$145,000 of these funds have been utilized for design services. Leaving \$355,000 available for the project construction.

Councilor Pelkey wanted to commend the BSC group that was a part of the design, town staff and the Wilson/Deerfield Advisory Committee for engaging Wilson and Deerfield residents in the project and seeking their feedback. He believes this is one of those investments we'll have in town that was not only for the people but was designed by the people especially in that community. He suggested that if the Wilson/Deerfield Advisory

Committee can have the charge of figuring out what the name of that park would be. Again, to have the community have their voice in trying to name the park.

Mayor Black-Burke stated that since sitting on the Council since 2018, so much time and effort has been put into getting us here with this item. She is excited to see us at this point. There has been lots of engagement through the Wilson/Deerfield Advisory Committee and through prior Councils. She's looking forward to the process of naming the park. Looking at the renderings she feels this will be a 'feather in our cap' as a town where citizens will be able to use the park for years to come.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- c) Approve 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 Gluck Hoffman to approve 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."

Councilor Eleveld stated this is not subject to early voting. This project does not require any local Windsor dollars. It is being funded by the State of Connecticut and some other federal funds we have already received. He would suggest a 'yes' vote to citizens. This will have no impact on the budget.

Mayor Black-Burke suggested that voters get out and vote 'yes' for this project. This has been a long time coming and will benefit our town.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

12) NEW BUSINESS

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Naeem to move Item 12c, act on resolution calling for an immediate de-escalation and permanent ceasefire in Israel and Palestine to appear before Item 12a, approve an appropriation in the amount of \$19,000 from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance for costs in association with the Wilson Park referendum.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- a) Act on resolution calling for an immediate de-escalation and permanent ceasefire in Israel and Palestine

MOVED by Councilor Naeem, seconded by Councilor Armstrong that the attached resolution entitled 'Resolution Calling for an Immediate De-escalation and Permanent Ceasefire in Israel and Palestine be approved.

Councilor Eleveld has an objection to the consideration of the question. This issue is germane to federal policy and federal issues. It is not germane to the Town of Windsor. Yes, there are residents asking about the issue as he's sure there are other residents sitting on the other side of the issue. He's not opposed to the idea of the ceasefire. However, he doesn't think it's appropriate for the Windsor Town Council to start taking up foreign affair issues. He objects to the consideration of the question.

Mayor Black-Burke asked if he is looking to amend the current motion or if he is just stating his objection to the motion itself? (2:40:52) Councilor Eleveld responded he is stating his objection which could be overruled by a 2/3 vote.

Mayor Black-Burke wanted to clarify that Councilor Eleveld is objecting to the motion and it will need a 2/3 vote to remove this motion from the agenda. Councilor Eleveld said yes.

Councilor Walker said he believes Councilor Eleveld's objection was there first so he is calling the question. Mayor Black-Burke asked if Councilor Walker wants to call the question. Councilor Walker said yes.

Mayor Black-Burke stated that they need to reference the Roberts Rules of Order to ensure it takes a 2/3 vote before they call the question. Councilor Walker stated he understood that.

The Town Council went into recess for five minutes at 9:58 p.m. The regular Town Council meeting reconvened at 10:03 p.m.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman stated that a woman from the audience stated a derogatory comment towards a councilor on the dais and she wanted them to be removed from the room.

Objection to the Question by Councilor Eleveld

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

Councilor Walker stated that this resolution was not filed, recorded or written in the appropriate manner under Council Rules of Order so the resolution cannot be brought before the Council for a vote.

Mayor Black-Burke asked Councilor Walker to reference the Section of the Rules of Order that he is referring to. Councilor Walker said it was 'Conduct of Meetings, Order of Business', Section 13 which states, "Each agenda and agenda item requiring Council action shall be filed with the Town Manager in written form by 12 noon of the Wednesday preceding the day of the Council meeting unless emergency conditions shall make other arrangements necessary."

Deputy Mayor Klase asked Councilor Walker because it was emailed, is he considering that wasn't written form? Councilor Walker said there was no email sent to any of the Town Councilors.

Deputy Mayor Klase said that the rules states, "...in written form to the Town Manager...." So the Town Manager received the resolution via an email. Is it that the email is not considered a written form? Councilor Walker said the email is considered a written form. Deputy Mayor Klase asked so what is the challenge then?

Councilor Pelkey stated that he believes what Councilor Walker is trying to say is that he is concerned about the 12 noon on Wednesday rule. Councilor Walker said that the written resolution would be ready by 12 noon on Wednesday which would be the day after the agenda setting. The Council Rules of Order say by 12 noon on Wednesday in writing. Since none of the Councilors saw it, he is not sure that it was sent. Councilor Naeem stated that the email was sent to the Town Manager.

Mayor Black-Burke explained that the resolution was brought forth during the agenda review meeting which Councilor Walker was a part of. During that meeting, it was stated when the resolution was coming forward. From her recollection and Deputy Mayor Klase's recollection, you were there, we went through this, and we shared that it would

be coming in written form. She believes that they did share that it would be done by the close of business that day.

Councilor Walker again asked if the written resolution was given to the Town Manager by 12 noon on Wednesday. (2:53:16) Mayor Black-Burke stated she doesn't believe that was part of the discussion but Councilor Walker believes it was. Mayor Black-Burke said that was not in the agreement and that Councilor Walker agreed, you were there as a delegation, and you sat there and we shared with you that we all made an agreement that it would be done by the close of business on Wednesday. (2:53:42) Councilor Walker said that the written resolution was not given to the Town Manager by 12 noon on Wednesday. The promise was that we would get the information on the resolution. We did not see the resolution or the wording until it was made public on Thursday.

Councilor Naeem added the discussion was at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday that we would draft a resolution, bring it forward and share it with the Town Manager. The Town Manager, as a part of the agenda packet, would then disburse that information to the full Town Council. We also agreed, recognizing that we had this discussion at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, that we would get it out to the Town Manager by the end of business on Wednesday. That was the agreement that was made there. We asked Councilor Walker if that was okay and he said yes but he needed to see it before he could comment on it. Councilor Walker was here and he was able to comment on it. Councilor Walker again stated but he didn't see it by 12 noon on Wednesday. Councilor Naeem stated that the Town Manager needs to see it by 12 noon on Wednesday, not the Town Council.

Councilor Armstrong asked Councilor Walker if it is his bottom line to object to this motion? Councilor Walker said he is objecting to the resolution coming for a vote tonight because it did not meet the specified time frame. Most importantly, he personally requested that he and others needed to see the wording in the resolution. That was never sent to any of us. They only saw the resolution when the public saw it.

Deputy Mayor Klase stated that she believes the language ".....filed with the Town Manager in written form by 12 noon of the Wednesday preceding the day of the Council meeting unless emergency conditions shall make other arrangements necessary is pertinent here. She believes 'other arrangements' were made at the agenda review meeting. She read more of Section 13 which outlines when the Town Manager needs to give the Town Council agenda to the Town Councilors. Since it is outlined in Section 13 when the Town Manager would get information and when the Town Council gets information, she believes they are two separate actions. She feels this clarifies when the Town Council should get the information.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman wanted to clarify the dates that we are talking about are Tuesday and Wednesday.

Mayor Black-Burke said she is very concerned in this moment that the supposition would be made about a conversation that took place with the Town Manager, the Assistant Town Manager, the Deputy Mayor Klase and Councilor Walker in a room. She explained

what happened during the agenda review meeting on January 30th and the agreement that was made by all in the room which was they wanted to make sure that the resolution would be given to the Town Manager by the close of business on Wednesday. Councilor Pelkey asked the Town Manager when he received the email. Councilor Naeem interjected and asked if we can bring this item forward for discussion?

Councilor Walker said he's going to have a point of order on this one as well. Councilor Pelkey is asking the Town Manager a question which is germane to the conversation here. Councilor Naeem said we've already shared that an email was sent to the Town Manager before close of business. Councilor Walker interjected to say he is asking the Town Manager a question. Councilor Naeem and the Mayor have said that the resolution was given to the Town Manager in a timely fashion. When did you put the resolution into writing to give it to the Town Manager? Councilor Naeem said it was Wednesday, January 31st at 2:27 p.m.

Councilor Pelkey stated there is a rule that needs to be adhered to which was not. There is integrity of process. Regardless of any agreement you may have had in a side room, that is a violation of our process. His frustration here is that we have gone outside of our rules on this. This are the rules in which we should abide by.

Mayor Black-Burke said her prior preamble is in regards to the fact that a supposition was made and that we sat in a room knowingly doing something out of the process. Councilor Walker did not raise this during the agenda review meeting. If we are going to put this down tonight, based on what's being shared here about a Council Rule of Order that was not presented during the meeting, nor was it discussed, even if we walked out of the room with an agreement, then Councilor Pelkey, I will have to say that's how we would have to move forward.

Deputy Mayor Klase asked for a 5 minute recess to discuss the matter.

Councilor Pelkey said he is in favor of waiving the rule but he would have to insist that we follow the rules at all times.

Mayor Black-Burke feels the conversation they are having really brings to head what needs to be said. At the end of the day, she thinks they all operate from a place where we want to ensure that, while we might represent separate parties, collegiality and discourse is a must. She is challenging the supposition as it calls into question everyone's integrity. Her response is not what is in the Council Rules of Order but it's about the supposition that was made about her publicly to the viewing audience about the integrity of people that sit in a room to make conversation and have discussions on what's coming on an agenda. We could have had this conversation last week, even last night.

Councilor Pelkey said he's just trying to stick to the straight facts. He's interested in following the rules, following the law, and the integrity of the process and he's not calling

anybody individually but this is just a simple ask to him to make sure that everything is dotted and crossed that's supposed to be.

MOVED by Councilor Pelkey, seconded by Councilor Walker to waive the Council Rules of Order for this particular motion of Council Rules of Order so we may continue to vote on this item tonight.

Motion Passed 8-0-1 (Mayor Black-Burke abstained)

Councilor Smith appreciates everyone coming out tonight. He is an advocate for any and all ceasefire that prevents the loss of innocent life, especially those of babies, children and women. Urgent action is needed to alleviate their suffering. Let us stand together in support of this ceasefire. Let's step towards peace, compassion and a brighter future for all.

Councilor Eleveld said for those who think it's appropriate to attack him personally, it's unfortunate because in America we don't attack people individually or personally because we don't like their ideas. If you don't like their idea, you make a comment about the idea. That's decorum. He added the deaths of innocents in Israel on the 7th was horrific and cruel and the deaths of those in Gaza is also horrific. We should pray for all their souls as he has. We should contact our federal officials to provide them our opinions. You can make your voice heard on the federal level. He represents the Windsor taxpayers and voters. He's heard from many people that we should not be considering this resolution. The issues of Israel, Hamas, Gaza and Ukraine, China etc. are all issues we should be concerned with. However, they should be brought up to our federal representatives. This year, in November, you as a citizen of America can choose to re-elect Joe Biden or you can choose to re-elect Senator Murphy or Representative Larson or someone else. That's one of your rights to vote for your officials. His upmost concern is for Windsor first. He was elected to the Town Council. We will be asking voters next month to approve the Wilson Park expenditure and shortly thereafter will be budget referendums and budget issues. Those will affect your mortgage, rent and pocketbook. Those issues are in our domain. We should not be entertaining this resolution in his opinion.

Mayor Black-Burke said a few weeks ago they were all there. The topic of the resolution came up and she shared that for her it's about a pursuit of peace. In an appeal of an immediate ceasefire in the ongoing conflict, she shared that she is a Reverend, a wife, a sister, a friend, and an elected official. Our world is marred by the darkness of conflict. It is incumbent upon us to implore for a ceasefire that provides solace to the suffering. She rejects all forms of anti-Semitism, anti-Bigotry, and anti-lifeness. She stands for peace and humanity. The top priority must be civilian protection. She condemns all targeting of civilians in Israel and Palestine. She is focused on a pursuit of peace and shared humanity. As a believer, her prayer continuously is for peace. For her, it has to be accompanied by the actions that safeguard the innocent and sow seeds of peace. That is why she is supporting a ceasefire resolution. She lives in Windsor and what happens here does affect her. If it touches a constituent in town, it affects her.

Mayor Black-Burke then calls the question and states that they will be moving to a vote.

Councilor Walker then indicated that other council members have not had an opportunity to finish debate.

Mayor Black-Burke then restates that she is calling the question and that they will be moving to a vote.

MAIN MOTION

Mayor Black-Burke then calls for a roll call vote.

YES

Councilor Smith
Councilor Naeem
Councilor Armstrong
Deputy Mayor Klase
Mayor Black-Burke

NO

ABSTAIN

PRESENT

Councilor Eleveld
Councilor Gluck-Hoffman
Councilor Pelkey
Councilor Walker

Motion Passed 5-0-0 (Councilors Eleveld, Gluck-Hoffman, Pelkey and Walker voted present)

- b) Approve an appropriation in the amount of \$19,000 from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance for costs in association with the Wilson Park referendum

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Pelkey, to approve an appropriation of \$19,000 from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance for expenses related to the Wilson Park referendum.

Town Manager Souza stated the proposed Wilson Park project per Section 9-3 of the *Town Charter* requires a referendum as it exceeds 3% of this fiscal year's tax levy. The Elections portion of the adopted FY 24 budget does not have enough available funds to meet the anticipated cost to hold a referendum at all seven polling locations. Therefore it is recommended the Town Council consider appropriating funds to meet the estimated expense.

The estimated cost of conducting the referendum is \$19,000. This includes printing of ballots and poll workers at all seven poll locations assuming the voting hours are 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. It is estimated that 50 to 55 poll workers are needed to cover all polling locations.

The recommended funding source is the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

c) Presentation of October 2023 Grand List

Josh Gaston, Assistant Town Assessor, and Larry Labarbera, Town Assessor, stated the purpose of a revaluation is to determine the current fair market value of all properties. For property tax purposes, state law requires that municipalities assess all property at 70% of its current fair market value. Notices were mailed to each property owner in late November indicating both the prior and the new value. In December, property owners who believed that their new value did not reflect a fair assessment had the opportunity to schedule an informal hearing with either the revaluation contractor (Vision Government Solutions) for residential properties, or the Town Assessor for commercial properties. Property owners scheduled informal hearings for less than 15% or 75 commercial or industrial properties, and less than 4% or 425 residential properties. 244 properties had their values adjusted after the informal hearing.

If at this point a property owner would still like to formally appeal their valuation, they are required to make an application to the Board of Assessment Appeals by 5:00 p.m. on February 20, 2024. Appeal forms can be found in the Assessor's office at town hall, or under the documents section of the Assessor's page on the town website at <https://townofwindsorct.com/assessor/>. Appeal hearings will be held in March, and in April if necessary.

Overall, the October 1, 2023 Net Taxable Grand List totals \$4,439,061,648 which is an increase of \$884,561,097 or 24.89%.

Changes by property category.

Real Estate – an increase of \$838,203,876 or 31.5 %.

Vehicles - a decrease of \$19,047,758 or 6.2%

Personal Property – an increase of \$65,404,979 or 11.1%

There are a number of noteworthy increases in real estate assessed value. The largest single increase is the Kennedy Road Amazon facility with an assessed value change equally of \$39.9M. This is primarily due to the second year of their three year tax abatement phasing out. The new Target distribution facility at 500 Groton Road added \$32.2M in assessed value and the value of the apartments at Great Pond Village increased by approximately \$20M.

Significant decreases in the value of office buildings in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic created a significant drag on the overall commercial / industrial real estate category. For example, the large office complexes owned by VOYA and The Hartford and the multi-tenant office building at 175 Addison Road experienced a collective \$90.4M decrease in assessed value. The resulting increase in value was 4.9% in the commercial / industrial segment.

Overall values of motor vehicles decreased by 6.24% and the commercial personal property category increased by 11.07%.

Combining the smaller percentage increase in commercial and industrial values, with a loss in motor vehicle values and the skyrocketing increases in residential home values, the residential property category and condos/planned community category combined now make up approximately 52% of the total 2023 Grand List compared to 43% of the total 2022 Grand List.

Councilor Eleveld asked about Hartford Financial Services which is down \$31M. Wasn't their prior value at about \$60M? Mr. Labarbera, Town Assessor, said yes. Councilor Eleveld said they lost half of their value? Mr. Labarbera said yes. Councilor Eleveld asked if that would be the same for the other office buildings? Mr. Labarbera stated yes. Councilor Eleveld asked if that applies to somewhere like 360 Bloomfield Avenue, the building at the corner of I-91 and Bloomfield Avenue. Mr. Labarbera said that one went down but it didn't go down as much as it's a multi-tenant building as opposed to a single occupancy larger office building that is no longer in demand.

Councilor Pelkey asked for the amount of people (individual property owners) who went through Vision Government Solutions. Mr. Gaston replied the total number was 422 adjustments were made. Councilor Pelkey asked if those adjustments are already factored into the grand list? Mr. Labarbera said yes.

Councilor Smith asked if the decline in automobiles is a normal situation. Mr. Gaston stated that typically we'd see the motor vehicle grand list increase as older vehicles are getting replaced with newer vehicles that are more valuable. They've seen in the past few years a drastic increase in used vehicle prices. So in spite of the fact that it was older, its value may have still gone up. This year we are seeing a reversal of that with a large chunk of vehicles going down around an average of 15% instead of the typical 5%-10% you might see in a single year. Although we have more vehicles on the list, there is still a decrease nonetheless.

Councilor Smith asked about the single tenant large commercial buildings. When you do the assessment is there any way the depreciation is factored into the possible decline of the building? Mr. Labarbera said some of the decline is based on depreciation and the age of the building. However, the most decline is based on the market value as no one wants a single use 400,000 foot building any longer. That is what happened to the two commercial buildings in Windsor.

Councilor Eleveld stated for the sake of the public that might be watching, the shift between non-residential personal property and vehicles versus everything else was almost 10%. He's looking at 46% versus 55% which comes out to 9%. It's a challenge for many of us who have to deal with these sorts of issues.

d) Consider settlement in Great Pond Preserve Ventures vs. Town of Windsor

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Pelkey to move item 12D to after Executive Session.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

13) RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Eleveld to accept the resignations of:

- Max Kuziak from the Zoning Board of Appeals
- Dave Raney from the Greater Hartford Transit District, the Library Advisory Board and Hartford Area Cable Television Advisory Board effective April 1, 2024, and
- Loretta Raney from the Historic District Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals effective April 1, 2024.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Naeem to:

- Appoint Lois Arsenault as a Democratic member to the Commission on Aging & Persons with Disabilities for a three year term to expire January 31, 2026 or until a successor is appointed.
- Appoint Brian Bosch as a Republican member to the Capital Improvements Committee for a three year term to expire May 5, 2027 or until a successor is appointed.
- Appoint Natalie Greenfield as a Democratic member to the Human Relations Commission for a three year term to expire May 31, 2025 or until a successor is appointed.
- Appoint Carolyn Joseph as a Democratic member to the Wilson/Deerfield Advisory Committee for a three year unexpired term to expire April 30, 2026 or until a successor is appointed.
- Appoint Leigh Ann Tyson as a Democratic member to the Human Relations Commission for a three year unexpired term to expire May 31, 2025 or until a successor is appointed.
- Appoint Ken Rosol as an Unaffiliated member to the Wilson/Deerfield Advisory Committee for a three year term to expire April 30, 2026 or until a successor is appointed.
- Appoint Jennifer Czelazewicz as a Democratic member to the Wilson/Deerfield Advisory Committee for a three year term to expire April 30, 2026 or until a successor is appointed.
- Reappoint Milo Peck as a Democratic member to the Board of Assessment Appeals for a four year term to expire November 11, 2027 or until a successor is appointed.

- Reappoint Marsha Brown as an Unaffiliated member to the Commission on Aging & Persons with Disabilities for a three year term to expire November 8, 2026 or until a successor is appointed.
- Reappoint Bradford Robinson as a Democratic member to the Conservation Commission for a five year term to expire November 30, 2027 or until a successor is appointed.
- Reappoint Liz Dupont-Diehl as a Democratic (residential) member to the Historic District Commission for a five year term to expire October 13, 2028 or until a successor is appointed.
- Reappoint Nicole Grant Yonkman as a Democratic Alternate (non-residential) member to the Historic District Commission for a two year term to expire October 19, 2025 or until a successor is appointed.
- Reappoint George Bolduc as a Democratic member to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a four year term to expire November 14, 2027 or until a successor is appointed.
- Reappoint Joseph Breen as a Republican member to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a four year term to expire November 14, 2027 or until a successor is appointed.
- Reappoint Meg Harvey as a Democratic Alternate member to the Town Planning & Zoning Commission for a two year term to expire November 11, 2025 or until a successor is appointed.
- Reappoint Elaine Levine as a Democratic member to the Town Planning & Zoning Commission for a five year term to expire November 10, 2028 or until a successor is appointed.
- Reappoint Deborah Hallowell as a Democratic Alternate member to the Town Planning & Zoning Commission for a two year term to expire November 11, 2025 or until a successor is appointed.
- Reappoint Leon Alford as a Republican member to the Public Building Commission for a three year term to expire November 30, 2026 or until a successor is appointed.
- Reappoint Gina Pastula as a Republican Alternate member to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a two year term to expire October 10, 2025 or until a successor is appointed.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Armstrong to extend the Regular Town Council meeting until 11:30 p.m.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

14) MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

- a) Minutes of the January 16, 2024 Regular Town Council meeting

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Gluck Hoffman to approve the minutes of the January 16, 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 Eleveld to enter Executive Session at 10:56 p.m. for the purpose of:

- a) Strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims and litigation (Great Pond Preserve Ventures vs Town of Windsor)

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; Larry Labarbera, Town Assessor, Josh Gaston, Assistant Town Assessor

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Eleveld to exit Executive Session at 11:05 p.m. and return to the Regular Town Council meeting.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

17) ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Naeem to accept the settlement of Great Pond Preserve Ventures vs. Town of Windsor as discussed during Executive Session.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

MOVED by Councilor Eleveld, seconded by Councilor Gluck Hoffman to adjourn the meeting at 11:07 p.m.

Motion Passed 9-0-0



Respectfully Submitted,

Helene Albert
Recording Secretary