



TOWN COUNCIL
HYBRID MEETING – VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON
February 20, 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

Councilor Naeem led the group in prayer/reflection.

3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Naeem led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4) PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS - None

5) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Joel Kent, 33 Hamson Hill Road, said Monday, February 5th, was a sad day for his town. That was the day a motion surpassed logic and reason. The Town Council had a feel good resolution that demanded an immediate cease fire in the current war where the State of Israel again is responding to the savage ambush and murder of peaceful citizens. They were asleep in their beds or attending a music festival. They were brutally attacked by terrorist thugs. This was the deliberate murder, mutilation, decapitation, of men and women and children including infants. Hamas knew full well what the response would be when tmmhey took Israeli and American citizens hostage. They knew their actions would unleash the full fury of the IDF and the relentless determined counter offensive. Unfortunately, for the Palestinian people, the terrorists embedded themselves deep within the civilian populous knowing full well that an attack by the IDF would cost the lives of innocent civilians. Hamas did not care. So Hamas, Palestinians civilians are collateral damage, they are expendable. He continued to give information on attempted peace agreements with Israel and attacks the Israelis have suffered. He added how millions of dollars were given to Gaza and how they were used. In bringing up this resolution, the Council injected this local body into international politics. They have no standing or authority. Hamas is still advocating for the annihilation of all Jews. The Mayor did not have control of the situation at the last Council meeting. Speakers routinely ignored the limit. A Palestinian flag was draped across three chairs in the front row. There were children waving signs. There was no attempt to stop speakers after their three

minutes. When they were told their three minutes were up, they continued to speak. It was a sad day.

Cora Lee Jones, 1171 Matianuck Avenue, stated she attended the last Council meeting to discuss revaluation issues. The chamber was filled with 90% non-Windsor residents. People with Palestinian flags and signs were there to support a ceasefire resolution. When she entered the room, she thought she was in the wrong meeting. Attendees were unruly and disrespectful. She knew her issue was not going to be dealt with that night. This was a very organized group. What impacted her most was their anger. The anger that these folks have toward America and many of its citizens. Today, people can describe in detail battles that were fought centuries ago. Their hate and anger are passed on. She supports Freedom of Speech, however in a public forum we should conduct ourselves in a respectful manner. That is what she was taught. This Council was not prepared for that at all. The Governor took charge immediately when he was interrupted. He stopped it. A door was open for the resolution but sadly also a platform to voice anger and disrespect to America. She is sad about what took place at the meeting and that we allowed it to happen.

James Durant, 166 Sunnyfield Drive commented on the upcoming FY 2025 budget and the excessive tax impact it represents in light of the current state mandated revaluation on his house. Nothing has been finalized yet by the Board of Education or the Town Council, but he fears he will be looking at a substantial increase to his property taxes based on recent property revaluations. All the town voters need to do is to remember when it comes time for the budget referendum not to forget their vote. He asked that the town apply the same test that he has taught his daughters. Is this something we need or something we want? If it's not needed, then don't add it to the budget. The action of adding unnecessary budget items or seeking increased salaries during this difficult economic inflationary times is just being irresponsible and self-serving. He trusts and hopes the Town Council will do better and show more responsibility with the current budget than they did with the recent resolution.

Paul Panos, 48 Brookview Road, said that he had some advice from Roberts Rules of Order regarding the last meeting. He said the Chair cannot unilaterally call the question. Someone else must call the question, another person must second it and it takes a 2/3 vote to call the question. This wasn't done. The motion was out of order. Nonetheless, it cannot be undone because he doesn't believe anyone objected at the time. Onto the issue of the resolution itself, he believes that the Windsor Town Council does not set policy and that it's not its place to comment on it. This resolution is out of place. It's a war in another part of the world and the issues are far too complex for the Town Council members in Windsor to understand and deal with as they have a tough enough time understanding local issues. The job of Windsor's Town Council is to take care of public work which affects the town. These are difficult enough to take care of. There are many more comparable resolutions and some of them far more relevant to us. We should have a resolution on the stop of undocumented workers coming across the border because that will directly affect local issues here. He would still say this type of resolution would not be under their purview. The resolution itself if it stops Israel it will have no lasting

effect on the killing in Gaza and eventually in Israel. What would stop the current killing is if Hamas places his military equipment apart from the civilian population. Even if Israel would stop attacking, Hamas would continue if not now, but just as soon as they replaced it. Hamas does not care about civilians. That is the basic issue here.

Eric Weiner, 130 Palisado Avenue, spoke of the bond resolution that is before them for paving International Drive tonight. He spent a substantial amount of time since the last meeting looking at various budget scenarios that may play out with regards to spending. Once you've had a chance to hear from the residents of Windsor about their desires, spending \$1.8 million now on a totally discretionary project he believes is completely irresponsible. Until you hear a broader perspective on the effect of revaluation on the budget and what he believes will be deep cuts that will have to be made, that will require reexamining our spending priorities. He believes paving a road will fall to the bottom of the list compared to some of the pressing needs in our schools and elsewhere. He is urging the Council to either completely reject this bond proposal tonight or table it until the broader outlines of the budget have been determined.

Victor Bernstein, 42 Orchard Road, said this is his first time addressing this body. He, his wife and two grown sons have lived in Windsor for 45 years. They were shocked and hurt by the petition and the behavior on the 5th of February calling for ceasefire in the Middle East. This is an international situation and has nothing to do with Windsor. Local original issues are our sole concerns. We have an active volunteers and employees of this unique community. We never felt threatened or felt like outsiders until this recent support that this Council passed. Being the son of a Holocaust survivor and a student of history, he can tell you this is how it started in Europe in the 1930's and he's heard plenty of stories from his mother about that. Asking for a ceasefire will never happen. Remember there was a ceasefire agreement on October 6th. You are delusional if you think this resolution can change anything. Change comes when parties are ready to work on solutions. Our focus should be on Windsor issues please.

Jill Dilisky (phonetic spelling), 333 Bloomfield Avenue, West Hartford said she is the board chair of the Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford that serves the Town of Windsor. She has been a bridge builder all of her life. She believes it is the role of local community and government. We should be coming together to solve local problems. Emotions are high on both sides of this war. She mourns the loss of innocent life in Gaza and Israel. The resolution will do nothing for Gaza or Israel. The only impact will be to further divide us. Our local Jewish community is scared. Anti-semitic acts are up 400% in Connecticut since October 7th. While criticizing Israel is not anti-semitic, making genocidal calls like 'from the river to sea, Gaza will be free' is inherently anti-semitic and that's what we've heard at many Town Council meetings. She was just in Israel and what happened on October 7th was a massacre of citizens by terrorists. It was the largest massacre of Jews since the Holocaust and the Jewish population still hasn't recovered to pre-Holocaust numbers. They make up only 0.2% of the world's population. She stated the atrocities that she has seen and what is happening now to Israeli and Palestine residents. While we don't believe passing this resolution was the right thing to do, we do

know that the leadership of this Town Council is committed to building bridges and we stand ready to work with them.

David Warren, 333 Bloomfield Avenue, West Hartford said he is the President and CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford. He is here to urge the Council to reconsider their ceasefire resolution related to the conflict in Israel and Gaza. The events of October 7th were a tragedy for Israelis and Palestinians. Hamas, a US designated terrorist organization, sent thousands of terrorists purposefully into Israel with the express purpose of murdering and kidnapping civilians. Over 1,200 were murdered—Jews, Christians and Muslims. The attack was in line with the stated goal of Hamas, the elimination of Israel (the Hamas Charter says this) and all its Jews. In a word, they're motivated by genocide. Hamas leaders have promised to commit more attacks. Listen to the words of Ghazi Ahmed, the senior Hamas leader, "We must teach Israel a lesson. We will do it again and again. This is just the first time and there will be a second, a third and a fourth. Will we have to pay a price? Yes, then we are ready to pay the price. We are called a nation of martyrs and we are proud to sacrifice martyrs." Israel which was targeted by Hamas for genocide is being falsely accused of genocide. Make no mistake, the chance of it becoming all too common in the protests against Israel like 'from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free', are calls for genocide against Jews. From the river to the sea means the Jordan River to the Mediterranean, Israel and Jews should be eliminated. He encouraged the Town Council to reconsider and withdraw this resolution. He knows that they all had the best of intentions, but this resolution has sent the wrong message to our community in a time when we all need to find common ground and redouble our efforts to ensure our region is respectful and inclusive.

Jeremy Halek, 1890 Poquonock Avenue, stated he is calling tonight to speak of the Israeli/Palestine resolution. This resolution is nothing but a dog and pony show put on by the elected officials of the democratic party of the Town of Windsor. It isn't going to stop the war in Gaza or do anything for that matter. He supports everyone's right to protest but this was not the correct forum. Local and state governments have no control over federal policy. Please take it up with your US congressman and US assemblies. He watched the last meeting and he was disgusted to watch a Town Council meeting that turned into a political left-lane rally. To him, it was shameful. Yes, it is terrible people are dying in Gaza, but Israel has a right to defend themselves just as the American people have the same rights after 9/11. He stands with Israel. We must defeat terrorism wherever it exists. If however we are going to pass a resolution on international issues, he has a few of his own. Let's pass one telling the Russians get out of Ukraine and another to secure our Southern border. Illegal immigration is an issue that truly affects people of our community. He is tired of left-lane radicals calling Council members or anyone who disagrees with them a racist as a political weapon to get their agenda passed. It needs to stop immediately. One of the things that separates America from the rest of the world is our right to respectfully disagree with each other before you use the word racist. May God bless the state of Israel and the United States of America.

Linda Alexander, 155 Fieldstone Drive, stated that the minutes of the February 5th Council meeting are not an accurate reflection of what was said at the meeting. Before

you vote to approve those minutes, she hopes the Council will read them carefully. She appreciates how difficult it is to try and transcribe when someone is speaking or even play back a tape but those minutes are not an accurate reflection of the meeting. They were edited. Please review those minutes and update them before approving them. Her next item has to do with revaluation. In January, people were allowed to come forward and ask for a review by an outside company, hired and paid for by the Town of Windsor. According to the speaker at the last meeting, approximately 425 people had their records reviewed and maybe half that number received some kind of reduction. She has not been able to find anyone who has had any significant reduction. People were given a few thousand dollars but nothing that would really impact the taxes. We are all in the same boat. We are all faced with re-evaluated properties and now it's up to the Council and the Board of Education to say let's look at the spending because people are already struggling to pay for their groceries, their electric bill and their utilities. This is another cumbersome burden for all of our residents. She thanked the Board of Education and the Council in advance as they will have to really sharpen their pencil this year to protect the citizens.

Leighann Tyson, 141 Giddings Avenue, said she would like to speak about the bond the Council might be voting on tonight regarding the road repair on International Drive. She wants the Council to think this through carefully, especially since we won't know what our mill rate is going to be. The spending of \$1.8 million should not occur when there are issues with the revaluation, the unknown mill rate and CIP projects that may not be fully funded, mainly those to make repairs to the school systems and their much needed HVAC in the schools. She would like the Council to not pass this bond so we can put that \$1.8 million aside to use it for the town versus fixing roads that the trucks of Amazon, Walgreens, etc. have messed up.

Irshad Ahmed, 120 Pierce Boulevard, stated his thanks to the Council for having the courage to pass the resolution. It takes a lot of courage to bring such issues up. He noted the silence in the room at tonight's meeting. He does not hear any cheering, yelling or screaming. He said what happened at the last Council meeting is not forgivable. Maybe it's covered in the freedom of speech but that's not the American way to interrupt people when they are talking. He is in favor of the resolution, he wants to reiterate that, but he is being treated with respect and that's what should have happened that night as well. That's the American way. Similar resolutions to ask for peace, asking to stop the killing of innocent civilians and asking for a ceasefire to his knowledge have passed in at least two dozen towns and cities. It's not unheard of, it's not unusual and it's not wrong. Does it have an impact on international relations and conflicts? No, it does not, but these are symbolic resolutions which shows that some people among us cares about peace and the silent majority cares about stopping of killing innocent civilians including children. 11,000 children have died. If we think we have the moral high ground as Americans, if we think Israel has the moral high ground, where is it when 11,000 children have died? He again thanked the Council for supporting the resolution to at least show that we care.

Mohammed Simjee, 125 Carriage Way, stated he is a psychiatrist. He appreciates that the resolution passed with the majority. He sees only two people here tonight in the

audience from the previous meeting. The last time the lady in the audience that is here tonight said America will come (inaudible). He said yes, America will come (inaudible). But don't forget that you also came here, you are not a native American. Native Americans welcome us. Israel is killing thousands and thousands of innocent children and innocent people and arresting them for no reason. He would appreciate that the Council continues with the resolution as is.

6) COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilor Naeem thanked everyone for coming out tonight so the Council can hear their voice and opinions on all matters being discussed here. She hopes to see them all continue to come in. She stated February is Black History month. We've had some really great events happening in town. This past weekend, the Windsor Arts Center hosted a wonderful event. The Historical Society has also been hosting events and they have more coming up. She encouraged everyone to check that out. A budget information session was hosted by the town last week. During the session, they spoke a lot about some of the things we've heard from our speakers tonight, the impacts of revaluation. If you were there, the numbers do not look exciting. We have a lot of work to do and lots of things to review. We will have an additional information budget session coming up next month for folks to come out, share their comments, concerns and ask questions as we start to think about what is needed here in Windsor and how we balance the significant change and impact of revaluation with the services that are needed in town. She encouraged everyone to come out so the Council can hear more about what's important to Windsor as it relates to our expenditures.

Councilor Walker thanked the Mayor for stating that the call to question at the last meeting did not follow proper parliamentary procedure. He expects that to be corrected. He wrote an article in the Windsor Journal and stated what he said. He also outlined the federal government dates, votes and statement on this ceasefire resolution in Israel. A couple days after the Windsor vote, the ceasefire group went to the State Capitol to protest. The Capitol police escorted them out of the building. These votes in congress mean the people demanding a ceasefire must take up that issue with their congressional members and the President of the United States, something he has been saying all this time. Today, at the United Nations Security Council the immediate ceasefire and Gaza resolution was presented. The United States vetoed the resolution. He brought up Windsor Sanitation. There was a letter sent to the Town Council which was brought up at the agenda setting session. For years, he's been talking about issues with Windsor Sanitation. For years, residents have been calling in about the lack of or poor business relationship that Windsor Sanitation has with Windsor. Their customer service, he would consider in his personal opinion, needs improvement. He's said many times that Windsor Sanitation is a monopoly and he has been challenged. When we have asked since he's been sitting on the Council to have other trash haulers come in, every single one of them have said no. When it's been pressed, the people who were asked to come in and compete or submit bids have said that they need a certain amount of people in town to make this a good business venture. While we have a portion of Windsor that contracts directly with Windsor Sanitation, there is the Wilson section which through the Wilson

Fire Department they are contracted with Windsor Sanitation. Therefore, a whole segment of Windsor is tied up. What needs to happen at some point is to say to the Fire District, and working with the Town Manager and the governing body which is the Council, that we as a town need to look at our town as a whole and bid on a contract to fit the town. For now, if most of the people don't want to use Windsor Sanitation, we're still stuck. Many people on the dais have had issues with Windsor Sanitation. He has written to them to let them know that every year his bill goes up. You as a company, must tell me why my bill is going up, give me a reason. He received no response. Something needs to be done.

Councilor Pelkey wanted to apologize to all Windsor constituents. As Councilor Eleveld has said, we received over 800 emails regarding the resolution and they are still rolling in. He prides himself in responding back to Windsor residents the best that he can, even if it's a thank you for their thoughts, but with this many emails, he doesn't see how he'll be able to do that quickly. He will go through them all, but it will take some time and he apologizes for that. What we offer in this country is the ability to connect with your local officials. He apologizes that an issue that isn't related to Windsor is dominating their time. Thinking about the last meeting, the thing that pops into his head is the serenity prayer. Just the idea of "grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, courage to change the things that we can and wisdom to know the difference..." In his humble opinion, this Town Council cannot change things half a world away regardless of our sentiments. He wants to stand for peace and wanted to vote for the resolution because who doesn't want peace? As he said in his comments on that night, "look at what happened at Sandy Hook at just the children in those classrooms and multiply that however many fold." He wants to be able to support those issues, but we don't have the ability to change that no matter how much we wish it to be true. He wants to focus on the things that he was elected to do here in Windsor. He hopes that everyone can realize what they can and cannot change and that we have the wisdom to know the difference. He added the Windsor Volunteer Fire Department is always looking for volunteers. If you know of anybody that may be interested, please direct them to windsorfire.org or have them contact any one of the councilors.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman thanked the Police Department and EMS for all they do. She thanked everyone for coming out. In her opinion, on February 5th, the Town of Windsor was used as a political pawn. Not unlike any other municipalities across our nation, they haven't taken the bait but Windsor did. As permitted to allow, the audience (many of whom did not live in Windsor) disrespected and heckled all the members of the Town Council, and there was the lack of control by our leaders who were to maintain a decorum in the chamber that evening. That is her opinion. It was also allowed that members of the audience, who were not from the Windsor community, to disrespect or heckle our constituents while speaking as well. Those constituents that elected the Council to be their voice, an advocate for issues that directly affect them here in Windsor, that too showed disrespect and lack of control and decorum. To discontinue debate, using an incorrectly applied motion and not allow the Town Council to provide their comments before the vote on the resolution. A resolution that caused unnecessary division within Chambers, and kept us from doing our business for our Windsor constituents that

evening. It was not only wrong, but showed a true lack of respect to the Councilors and those who elected us. That same night, there was a meeting in New Haven that protesters interrupted. The Mayor, Justin Elicker, showed leadership in closing the Chambers so the business of the city could be completed. To have put forth a resolution that will have no effect or assist in a ceasefire between Israel and Palestine and it did not put Windsor or its residents first. It showed that we allowed our town leaders, or Town Council, to be used and manipulated by members in higher positions within the State of CT and do their bidding and not what our residents expect from Windsor's local elected leaders. One of her larger concerns that evening was for those from the community that came up to the table to talk about the ceasefire and were in favor of it and vilified members of the Town Council and preceded to let us know what dedication and sacrifice they've given to organizations within the community. By saying these comments before the Town Council, members of the community in the audience tell staff that were present the broadcast was insulting. We the Town Council members have given service to the community for many years. It concerns her that some of these members from the community that spoke vehemently towards council members sit on commissions for the town. She asked, are these individuals there for the right reasons of helping Windsor or are they pushing their own agendas?

Councilor Eleveld said they've received over 800 emails regarding the resolution. He read one aloud. At the last meeting, he was attacked by many people. We all give our time as volunteers. None of us get compensation whatsoever. He spent almost two hours listening to comments and being berated by mostly non-Windsor residents. To be attacked is not appropriate and the Mayor allowed it to happen. The disrespect and flippant comments were insulting to him and all the councilors here. The majority of those that were present or zoomed in were not Windsor residents. As such, their comments were misplaced. They have their own town and cities. But most of those towns and cities are smarter not to get into the wasting of time on an issue we locally do not control and can have no impact on. Residents of Windsor, CT should have the privilege and the right to speak before anyone that has no vested interest in Windsor. When one visitor was screaming in the microphone, like this was a performance venue, he should have been told to speak in a normal voice or leave the room. But since he was yelling at me in the minority party, it was okay I guess. Why did we get berated? Because we stood on the simple principle the resolution is not germane to Windsor and still is not. When he and others of the minority party tried several times the removal of disrespectful members of the audience, we were ignored. That sends a signal to silence the minority and attack anyone that disagrees with the motion. I had to remind the audience that this is America and everyone is allowed to have their say in a respectful and peaceful manner. I will defend your right to say what you want, even if I find it vile. But it requires mutual respect that was not evident at our last Council meeting. The fact is we dealt with an issue that had no business before this body and is not germane to the operation of Windsor town government. What we are responsible for, he said repeatedly. To take a position that is not popular takes greater courage than it is to go with the flow which is often the easy way out. Each person on this body gets time at this point in our meeting to communicate. They can use that time to advocate for foreign affairs if they so choose. They do not. They talk about Windsor oriented items, concerns and activities. Then the majority

should ask themselves why they wasted the Council's time on the ceasefire resolution. We were elected by the residents and voters of Windsor, CT. Those that yearn for national or international issues should run for US Senate, the House or even President. Residents of other towns, cities, states outside of Windsor are not our constituents. We should remember that we are here to work for our Windsor constituents.

Councilor Armstrong said she appreciates everyone that came out tonight. She echoed that we all have received many emails and they are still coming in. We will read them. We thank you for that. We will give them thought and consideration. She commended the Mayor as the speaker of several black history programs. We are proud of that. She asked that all continue to support the programs/events in Windsor. She attended the budget information session and a lot was brought out regarding the clarity of revaluations and the budget, which was very informational. She does ask that those that have questions or do want to join in for these virtual and in person meetings to come out and do that. We are here for you.

Deputy Mayor Klase thanked everyone for coming out tonight. She thinks that the last meeting had many lessons learned. The Mayor has introduced some rules for the Council to consider for public comment so we don't find ourselves in that kind of situation again. She thinks they were trying to balance free speech and perhaps could have done better. She apologizes for that. She's committed to doing better going forward. She wanted to clarify in the minutes there were only 16-17 people that spoke that were from Windsor at the meeting with 34 total people speaking. So it wasn't an overwhelming majority of folks that were not from Windsor that were at the meeting. She also stated that they have received 800-1,000 emails by now. She wanted to note that those 800 emails are exactly the same template email. On her random check of the emails, she has not yet found a Windsor resident and some are from out of state. The work of this body is difficult and there is a difference in opinion on whether or not we should be involved in foreign matters. When you see the pain and the fear on all sides of this issue and our local community, she thinks that the Council acted to do something and they all know that their work has just begun. That is why she supported the resolution. She's been largely focused on the Board of Education budget and has been attending those meetings and the revaluation and the town budget. There are some really good videos on the town's website that explain the budget process. She encourages all to go to that site and look at those if you're not clear on how the budget is formulated. Also, attend the budget forums. The Mayor has been talking about having more public forums in more venues so we can talk about what we are all facing. She learned and took away from one of her former positions that passion is a great thing but passion over a purpose should never take the way. She will continue to be passionate with a purpose.

Councilor Smith said that February is Black History Month. It was very spiritually uplifting and emotionally rewarding for him to attend various Black History events this month. He hopes we all take the time out this month to celebrate the history of the contributions of black Americans in the United States.

Mayor Black-Burke said the last Council meeting was a unique meeting. One that we have not seen in Windsor before. She is sure that as we continue to move forward, we may or may not experience something like that again. She also wanted to say that we've had conversations with the Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford. She does like the term that was used in regards to looking for that 'common ground' and taking the time to continue to 'build bridges.' In Windsor, we often lift up our diversity as something that should be applauded. We are a diverse town. We have several cultures and nationalities in our town. So that being said, we do need to find common ground to build bridges so we can start to have a conversation to find understanding. The resolution was brought forward because we do have members of our community that had a concern so they brought it to their Town Council. At our meeting on January 16th and at the last meeting she shared that as a Council she believes they do have the capacity to hear from our citizens their concerns, all of their concerns. Also to hear from citizens their discontent for a resolution. That's allowed. We also have to hear about revaluation and all the other components. She shared the last meeting was difficult. Lessons were learned. She watched the tape a few times. You read the minutes and you determine what can be done differently, so that there is not a feeling of ill. What can be done differently to help with the pain that is being felt by our Jewish, Palestine, and Islamic communities? How do we address that as a community and move forward? At the last meeting, yes, watching the tape and reviewing Roberts Rules of Order, that is very correct. The use of that parliamentary procedure called a question and she didn't wait for a second and she did not even say if all were in favor. The use of that parliamentary procedure in that moment was done in error. She is not above stating when she makes a mistake or when something was done incorrectly. However, the vote on the resolution was germane as we were in that portion of the meeting. It was a difficult meeting and there is a lot we can all reflect on. She feels the meeting was an exhibit of democracy, varied opinions, folks having various thoughts and that can't happen here in a Council Chamber. However, what we have to talk about is how do we build that common ground. How do we build a bridge so we can address the fear and the pain of our Jewish, Islamic and Palestinian community here in Windsor. She called everyone's attention to the March 12th referendum regarding the Wilson Gateway Park. She is inviting everyone to support the Black History celebrations that are happening. The Human Relations Commission is having a few events. There's a lot going on in Windsor.

7) REPORT OF APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

a) Public Building Commission

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

Oliver Ellsworth School Humidity Mitigation Design - 9574

van Zelm Engineers have completed the design which has been accepted by the PBC. The Dedicated Outside Air Units are being manufactured and on track to arrive in time for construction. Bidding for construction is anticipated for March 2024 with construction over the 2024 summer break.

Sage Park Middle School Slab Moisture Mitigation Project

The PBC has reviewed the latest proposal provided by Hoffman Architects and Engineers that recommends evaluating the exterior drainage and groundwater conditions. Currently this proposal is tabled until further review. The PBC has asked the Building and Facilities Department to confirm the existence and operation of the footing drains. The Building and Facilities Department determined that footing drains were not called for in the design of the addition and physically verified that footing drains were not installed. The PBC will continue to discuss the matter in order to determine the best course of action. Construction is anticipated over the 2025 summer break.

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. Punchlist inspection is scheduled and project completion is scheduled by end of March 2024.

Aquatic Facilities Improvements Goslee Pool Houses Renovations - 9564

This project is fully completed and closed.

Milo Peck School HVAC Construction - 9538

Nothing new to report. The PBC is awaiting further directions from Town Council.

Clover Street School Roof Replacement Project - 9549

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

LP Wilson Community Center HVAC Renovations Project - 9551

Work continues to progress on Phase 1. Dedicated Outside Air Systems are up and running. Programming continues on the Building Management System. Phase 1 work is expected to be completed by the end of March 2024. Phase 2 bids will be received by the end of the week and reviewed at the next PBC meeting. Construction of Phase 2 is scheduled for summer of 2024.

330 Windsor Ave. Community Center Gym HVAC Renovations - 9550

The three roof top units are installed and running. Additional work is required on RTU-1 in order to properly integrate into Building Management System. The PBC expects all work to be completed by the end of April 2024.

Clover Street School Restroom ADA Code Compliances - 9552

The PBC reviewed and approved design drawings. Quotes for Hazardous Material testing are being evaluated. Construction is scheduled for summer 2024.

LP Wilson BOE Restroom Renovations - 9553

The PBC reviewed and approved design drawings. Hazardous Material testing will be scheduled for summer of 2024 and construction is scheduled for summer 2025.

Sage Park Middle School Roof Design Project - 9541

The BOE has submitted a grant to the State of Connecticut, Office of School Construction Grant (OSCG), which has been approved. The next step is local review which is currently underway. Once local review is completed, the project will go out to bid. The PBC has reviewed and accepted the design drawings. Construction is scheduled for summer of 2024.

Poquonock Elementary School Roof 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. Punchlist inspection is scheduled and project completion is expected to be completed by the end of March 2024.

Welch Park Pool House Renovations Project - 1938

The General Contractor has completed a good portion of the demolition and new construction has started. The old wade pool has been completely removed. Lap pool skimmers and bottom drains have been removed and modifications for new skimmers and drains are under way. Pool house concrete slab has been removed and new utilities have been installed and inspected. The anticipated completion is Spring of 2024.

Councilor Pelkey asked about the project number next to every building on the report. What does that signify? Mr. Hazelton replied that it is the project number for that job.

Deputy Mayor Klase asked about the Sage Park Middle School slab moisture mitigation project. What is the anticipated start date for that project in the summer of 2025? Can you tell us why that project is scheduled so far out? Mr. Hazelton stated they are still trying to figure out what is wrong. He's thinking that is why it has been pushed out in case they can't get to it this summer, they can then get to it by the summer of 2025.

Councilor Smith asked about the Sage Park Middle School project. He is reading the report and it says that the foot drains were not included by the architect or not requested by the town. How detrimental is this to the project? Mr. Hazelton stated that they came with some recommendations that the Public Building Commission feels needs further review. It doesn't serve what they think could be the problem with the water coming in.

Councilor Smith asked is it detrimental to the project to not have the drains included? Mr. Hazelton said this is the main concern we have. Assistant Town Manager Colby added that as of right now they are determining that footing drains were not initially called in for the design of the project initially when that part of the school was built. They are now seeing if this will be beneficial for the project to mitigate that moisture. The PBC along with the other teams are exploring that option.

8) TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Souza gave the following report:

Proposed Solar Energy Facility

The CT Siting Council conducted the public hearing on the proposed solar energy facility on February 8th. The first portion of the hearing lasted from 2:00 p.m. until approximately 5:30 p.m., then there was the public comment portion at 6:30 p.m. There was a small number of residents that spoke. Residents can still submit written comments to the Siting Council until April 18th. The Siting Council continued the evidentiary portion of the public hearing until March 19th at 2:00 p.m. as not all parties completed their testimony/cross examination. The Siting Council requested the petitioner for additional information related to visual impacts, sound study, options to potentially increase setbacks/buffers from neighbors, as well as archeological and endangered species studies.

VITA Tax Assistance for the Elderly

The IRS's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs offer free basic tax return preparation to qualified individuals. VITA offers assistance to people who generally make \$60,000 or less, persons with disabilities, and limited English-speaking taxpayers. A VITA representative will be on site at the main library for appointments on Monday evenings from 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM from February 5 – April 15. Appointments are required. Please sign up at windsorlibrary.com or by calling the Reference Desk at 860-285-1918.

I-291 Bridge Rehabilitation Project – Public Information Meeting

Town staff participated in a meeting earlier this winter with representatives from CT DOT and South Windsor to discuss a future rehabilitation project of the I-291 Bridge. The bridge connecting Windsor and South Windsor over the Connecticut River was originally built in 1958 and reconstructed in 1993. This project will essentially be a full rehabilitation and surfacing project to extend the service life of the structure. Construction is anticipated to begin in the spring of 2026 and be completed in the summer of 2027. This project would be funded through federal and state funds. No town funds would be required.

CT DOT will be holding a virtual public information meeting on February 22, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. Registration is required to participate. Please register for the virtual public information meeting at: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_-ydNahDpSwefyZFuSdboqQ#/registration.

Once registered, you will receive a confirmation email with a link to access the meeting.

The meeting will also be live on YouTube at: <https://portal.ct.gov/ctdotvpimarchive>.

Members of the public can submit comments and questions during the two-week public comment period following the meeting. Please direct comments and questions by March 7, 2024 to: DOTProject0164-0245@ct.gov and 860-594-2020.

Windsor Housing Authority - Shad Run Modernization Project

Last month, the Connecticut Department of Housing awarded the Town \$2M in Small Cities Community Development Block Grant funds for exterior improvements to the Housing Authority owned 52 unit Shad Run senior housing project. Scope of work includes replacing roofs, windows, doors and siding. Once we receive the grant agreement from the CT Department of Housing, we will be able to determine the next steps and an overall project schedule.

Also, the Housing Authority (WHA) is being invited to apply for grant funding through the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority to make improvements to the interiors of the apartments and the community room at Shad Run. The WHA is currently soliciting for a consultant to prepare the application to CHFA and is expected to have that person onboard by the end of February. WHA previously secured 'A Probable Estimate of Project Costs' totaling nearly \$6.5M including soft costs, site work improvements, kitchen and bathroom upgrades, flooring, painting, electrical upgrades, hot water heater replacement, etc. This grant funding would go directly to the Housing Authority so the town does not have a formal role in the application or management of the project should it be funded. There are also no local match requirements under the SHIP program. The WHA should know in late spring or over the summer as to whether SHIP funding has been awarded.

Fitch Court Roof Update

Bids for the Fitch Court roof replacement project were due to the Windsor Housing Authority (WHA) on Friday, February 16th. Town staff provided the WHA a list of roof contractors that have worked on town projects and the project was also posted to the Department of Administrative Services Bid Portal and advertised in newspapers. The WHA has been awarded grant funds in the amount of \$500,000 for this project. We will keep the Council informed as to the results of the roof bids.

Snow Moon – Full Moon Hike

Come out to Northwest Park for a Full Moon Hike guided by Northwest Park staff. The next hike is the Snow Moon hike which begins at the Northwest Park Warming Shed on February 23rd from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM. Use your senses to explore the park after dark. Grab the family or some friends and enjoy the beautiful scenery while being active outdoors and learning about the seasonal changes happening in nature. Residents \$12 / Non-Residents \$16. For more information call 285-1886.

Valuation Appeals

Those who submitted an appeal should expect to be notified by the Assessor's Office starting the week of February 26th for appointments with the Board of Assessment Appeals. The BAA will be holding meetings during March and potentially into April. An individual has the ability to appeal the BAA's decision to the Superior Court within 60 days of notice of their decision.

If an individual has not filed an appeal through the BAA they cannot go through the Superior Court.

Milo Peck HVAC Update

The original portion of the Milo Peck Child Development Center and Montessori School was originally constructed in 1947. The existing HVAC systems (boiler, steam heat exchangers, circulating pumps and valves) have been in service for well over fifty years and routinely break down. The existing heating system is a combination of hot water radiation and steam radiators. Classrooms are currently cooled with through the wall air conditioning units. The current HVAC systems do not provide any building ventilation.

The project was not approved at the February 22, 2022 Special Town Meeting, as concerns were raised relative to the use of fossil fuel for the heating portion of the new HVAC system. Suggestions were made to conduct a comparative analysis of a non-fossil fuel option with the original design.

Based on Town Council direction, the PBC oversaw the completion of a study evaluating the original project with natural gas versus an all-electric design. The evaluation compared both options' construction costs, annual operating costs, and lifetime equipment replacement costs.

- Option 1 was the initial design consisting of natural gas and electric components that was estimated at \$2.80M.
- Option 2 was the all-electric design that was estimated at \$3.06M.
(Please note above costs do not include soft costs or contingency.)

The PBC met twice with the town's Clean Energy Committee to discuss project options. The PBC met in December 2022 and recommended Option 1 as the preferred design. Given the need to further evaluate and discuss the options with Town Council and the need to rebid the project, it was recommended this project schedule be deferred. Currently it is in the FY 2024 adopted Capital Improvements Plan.

Staff respectfully asks that the Town Council refer this to the Town Improvements Committee for further discussion on the project and possible alternative approaches.

Councilor Peleky asked about the solar project on River Street. Do we have a ballpark figure on where we are with that so far? Assistant Town Manager Colby stated he does not have a figure at this time, but he can look into it and get back to him.

Councilor Pelkey asked how many appeals have been filed currently. Assistant Town Manager Colby said as of early this afternoon there were over 120.

Councilor Pelkey asked about I-291 bridge. Is there any impact to a potential park, if the voters approve a new park in Wilson? Is there anything on the on ramp and off ramp area that would impact that site? Assistant Town Manager Colby said not to his knowledge at this time. It's solely the decking of the bridge itself and that wouldn't impact the ramp way.

Deputy Mayor Klase asked about the I-291 project. When it was redone the last time, we asked the State to soften the facades of the bridge abutments. Is there anything they can

do like that? Assistant Town Manager Colby stated he will refer her comments over to the Department of Transportation team.

Deputy Mayor Klase inquired about the Housing Authority projects. She just wanted to know if the Windsor Housing Authority will be or has made the residents aware of the upcoming projects? If not, how do they plan to make them aware and how do they plan to minimize the impact of that work to them? Assistant Town Manager Colby said that he can look into how they plan to communicate with the residents about the Windsor Housing Authority projects.

Deputy Mayor Klase inquired about the Board of Assessment Appeals number of 120 appeals. That's a big number and she'd like to know when we get to that point, can they see how many were successful or not successful. Assistant Town Manager said that we can relay that information to the Council once we get it.

Councilor Naeem has a question about the Shad Run proposal of \$6.5 million. Are we looking to help shape the request or are they looking to bring a consultant in if the request is approved to oversee the project? Patrick McMahon, Economic Development Director, stated that the Windsor Housing Authority has put out a request for a consultant to prepare the application for the state-supported housing portfolio application.

Councilor Naeem asked if we in the past have ever done any support work from the town side. Are there any shared agreements between the Windsor Housing Authority and town? Mr. McMahon said the town went forward with the CDBG application which was a cooperative enterprise. We, on the town's side, had selected the consultant to prepare the CDBG application. We are in close contact with the Executive Director and the property manager to be done as soon as possible between those two projects.

Councilor Naeem inquired about the boiler replacement. When it was voted down, we had state funds potentially coming in for that. Is that correct? Assistant Town Manager Colby stated he believes it was more of a blend and it was a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) project at that time.

Councilor Naeem asked if there is an opportunity for us to go back for that type of funding or are we looking at other ways to cover those gaps that we see an increase in? Assistant Town Manager Colby said that is something that they can explore and discuss.

Councilor Naeem then asked as far as the CIP goes, there is no state or federal funds allocated for it? Assistant Town Manager Colby said there is not at this time. Currently, it is in the CIP at \$3.9 million.

Councilor Armstrong asked if there was any projected date for the work to begin at Milo Peck School. Assistant Town Manager Colby stated as of right now that project has been deferred and is on hold until further direction and guidance from the Town Council.

Mayor Black-Burke stated that we will be bringing up Milo Peck and the boilers project and will be referring it to the Town Improvements Committee tonight. It's a conversation that needs to be had in regards to what is needed and when that will happen.

9) REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Town Improvements Committee – Councilor Smith stated they do have a Town Improvements Committee happening in the next couple of weeks. We will be making a general assessment on the current projects to see where we stand and to see which projects are most ready to go. Hopefully, we'll have a concrete assessment of everything that is in the works and those that are ready and have funding in place.

Finance Committee – Councilor Naeem said there was a Finance Committee meeting a few weeks ago. They started off by getting a review of the audit. This year, we had a new auditing firm. She recognized the town staff in the room that worked diligently with the new firm. The feedback we received from the firm was that the town had prepared all the things that the auditors were looking for. They also discuss second quarter financials. There was nothing major to report. They discussed the Capital Improvement Plan's financing plan. They looked at the list of eight priority projects and walked through what we have to work with from a cash perspective. They broke down where they could use ARPA funding, General Fund cash and bonding. We had our budget informational meeting last week. She was hoping to see more residents there. She encouraged residents to attend the next budget information meeting that will take place in March. We are planning to try a couple of new things out as well in terms of being available to our residents and talking about the budget and the impact of revaluation. In their December Town Council meeting, they discussed budget parameters. A couple of key things that will impact our budget this year is there will be a 18% increase in our employee and retiree insurance benefits, we have our transfer payment to Great Pond which is growing 120% due to Grand List growth, and the town's utilities are increasing by 14%. We are currently starting to work with the Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager and finance team to start understanding beyond the budget we will be presenting, which will be with a zero dollar opening cash. That is what the Council had voted on several years ago. There will be a budget proposed with the use of open cash to it. There will be talk about what the phase in benefit will look like. They will be identifying what potential budget scenarios could be like. She urged residents to come out to the information budget session.

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

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

Personnel Committee – Deputy Mayor Klase had nothing to report.

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."

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

Motion Passed 9-0-0

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

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

The project is part of the FY24 CIP. The construction was recently bid. At this time, staff is seeking funding for the construction of this project. If funding is approved, the construction is expected to commence in the spring of 2024 and be complete in the fall of 2024 depending on weather.

Financial Impact

The project costs are as follows:

Construction	\$ 1,480,000
Inspection, testing, survey	\$ 148,000
Contingency	\$ 148,000
Bonding	<u>\$ 34,000</u>
Total	\$ 1,810,000

This project is in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for the FY24 fiscal year. The CIP allocated \$2,290,000 for this project. Based on received bids, the requested

funding is in the amount of \$1,810,000 in bonding. The estimated average annual debt service, based on a 15 year term and a 5% interest rate is \$169,000.

Assistant Town Manager Colby said the last time that this road was improved upon significantly was back in 1995 with some small improvements being made in the 2005 time frame. It has had two unsuccessful LOTCIP applications due to the scoring criteria and it's been a very competitive grant program. In regards to funding, the CIP had allocated \$2.29 million for the project and based upon the received bids, the request for funding is in the amount of \$1.81 million in bonding. The estimated average annual debt service based upon a 15 year term and a 5% interest rate, is \$169,000. It falls under one of the significant CIP financing plan that was discussed with the Finance Committee. There are four projects that we're looking to be bonded in the amount of \$6.8 million over the course of the fiscal year. The town is also utilizing the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance as well as ARPA funds to fund about \$7.4 million cash funding in seven projects total. Currently, we are proposing this for borrowing as we're trying to find a balance and not looking to burden the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance at the same time.

Councilor Eleveld asked if there is a way to use \$169,000 or the \$1.8 million in budget terms relative to the revaluation to reduce the pain? Assistant Town Manager Colby said in order to reduce the revaluation, a significant amount of money would be needed. Councilor Eleveld restated the question in a different manner. Assistant Town Manager Colby responded that we would not look at borrowing money to reduce and mitigate the tax impact.

Councilor Eleveld said if we don't spend the \$1.8 million right now, we'd have to spend more down the road for the project. Is that reasonable? Assistant Town Manager Colby said the project costs could increase over that time as well as the interest rates.

Councilor Eleveld said the effect of borrowing this money is \$169,000 and that would hit the 2025 budget, correct or are you thinking 2026? Assistant Town Manager Colby said it would be in the 2025 budget.

Councilor Eleveld said that our debt service percentage is going to stay approximately even if not go down a little over the next year or two in light of the budget constraints we are approaching with revaluation, correct? Assistant Town Manager Colby said correct.

Councilor Eleveld does not see why we couldn't move forward with this item. It will not be a substantial amount of money at a \$169,000 annual expenditure. It is still going to mean that we are keeping our debt service numbers lower than they were the prior year and the road does need repair.

Councilor Pelkey wanted an explanation of the 'poor to fair' range that International Drive has been classified as. What does that mean? Ms. Choate said there is significant alligator cracking (which looks like a spider web of cracking), so the pavement is

deteriorated. There are also pot holes and patching on the road. The most significant issue is the pot holes. The rating is a significant degradation in the pavement.

Councilor Pelkey stated that if he were driving down this road, why not just fill the pot holes? Ms. Choate stated that is very inadequate. You can fill pot holes but it doesn't last.

Councilor Naeem stated that this makes sense to her as well. Our debt service is going to go down next year. Again we're not using opening cash on this project because it is a large amount as compared to other projects where we are suggesting to use opening cash. In terms of the impact it will have on the budget, it's every \$3-\$4 million it's a 4% change in net taxes.

Mayor Black-Burke said that she believes Councilor Eleveld was asking the questions because they were asked of us from our constituents. Should this be happening now versus at another time given what we are facing for revaluation? She believes that is what he is referring to correct? Councilor Eleveld said yes. Mayor Black-Burke asked that the answer be reiterated as to why we are making this decision right now. Assistant Town Manager Colby said on the financial cost of it, the project did come in under budget from \$2.2 million that we had in the CIP down to \$1.8 million. Based upon a 15 year term and a 5% interest rate, it would be \$169,000 for the annual debt service. When we look at our debt for our remaining large capital improvement projects for FY 24, we are currently allocating \$6.8 million in borrowing and we are using \$7.4 million in cash funding projects for a variety of different projects. We are funding seven projects with the cash funding currently compared to four projects that are going to be borrowed over the course of this fiscal year.

Councilor Gluck-Hoffman asked if there is any way that the \$169,000 can be offset somewhere else within the budget? Assistant Town Manager Colby said that is a discussion that the Town Council can have.

Motion Passed 8-0-1 (Councilor Gluck-Hoffman abstained)

12) NEW BUSINESS

- a) Authorize the submittal of grant applications to the CT Brownfields Remediation program related to the former Stanadyne manufacturing complex at 90 and 92 Deerfield Road

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Naeem, to approve the submittal of a Remediation and Limited Assessment Grant application to the Department of Economic and Community Development for \$3.5 million for environmental remediation at 90 Deerfield Road on behalf of 90 Deerfield Road LLC.

Patrick McMahon, Economic Development Director, and Peter Goffstein from IRG stated Stanadyne, a designer and manufacturer of fuel injection equipment for gasoline and

diesel engines, had a long-time presence on Deerfield Road and was a major employer in the community. In 2013, the property was split into two separate parcels – 90 Deerfield Road containing an approximately 400,000 SF production facility on 32.95 acres and 92 Deerfield Road containing two separate buildings of approximately 160,000SF and 90,000SF on 19.76 acres. Over the last fifteen years, Stanadyne had a reduction in workforce and by 2021 had essentially shut down operations in Windsor. In 2023, Stanadyne declared bankruptcy and Industrial Realty Group, LLC (IRG) was able to acquire both 90 and 92 Deerfield Road.

IRG is a Los Angeles-based company which owns and operates more than 150 major projects and developments in 30 states (including 123 Day Hill Road – home to Specialty Printing). IRG is nationally recognized as a leading force behind the adaptive reuse of buildings and facilities throughout the nation.

IRG intends to invest approximately \$7M in building upgrades to attract multiple tenants to what will be known as the Connecticut River Business Park. IRG is seeking assistance from the town to secure State of Connecticut brownfield funding to continue to assess and remediate contamination that occurred under previous ownership.

IRG would like to pursue a Remediation and Limited-Assessment Grant in the amount \$3.5M for 90 Deerfield Road and an Assessment-Only Grant for 92 Deerfield Road in the amount of \$200,000. The work associated with 90 Deerfield Road would include soil and groundwater remediation, groundwater monitoring and hazardous building materials abatement. For 92 Deerfield Road a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment would be conducted for soil and groundwater testing.

There is no financial cost to the Town associated with this grant. The municipality is serving solely as a pass-through of state funding assistance to the developer.

The redevelopment will result in a functional business park which will help with property valuation, as well as job creation in the community.

Mr. Peter Goffstein from IRG gave an overview of the company and what they do.

Councilor Pelkey asked what if the town chooses not to act and you don't get the grant. What are your company's contingencies for these funds? Mr. Goffstein stated there are other programs that are available that they would potentially pursue. This program is the best that is suited for this. The other contingency is a lesser investment in the buildings. The closure will take some time to happen. This allows us to front load all of the assessment and remediation in the next 12 months. If we have to spend that \$4.0 million out of our funds without certainty of knowing what it is, it may take them another 2-3 years. This helps them to accelerate redevelopment of the property.

Councilor Pelkey asked what is IRG's obligation should there be leakage discovered from abutting properties? Can IRG handle taking care of that? Mr. Goffstein said he is not sure what the regulations specifically call for. He's more a finance and redevelopment

leasing person. In situations like that, they work with the CT DEEP to resolve those issues to their satisfaction. He is not sure what the protocol is. But they would follow that protocol with CT DEEP for this property and any adjacent properties for which we would be considered to have responsibility.

Mr. Goffstein said that they have redeveloped brownfields for decades now. They have quantified best, medium, worse case scenarios. They think they are comfortable with the level of grant they have here. They can address those worst case scenarios with that investment. From his understanding, the property slopes from Deerfield Road back towards the railroad. The properties up gradient probably haven't received any contamination to the ground water associated with the historic manufacturing that was there.

Councilor Smith asked if there is a matching fund requirement for this grant. If there is, what percentage of the total cost is the matching fund requirement? If not you, who is responsible for matching the grant? The advocate, which would be the town, or the recipient which would be IRG? Mr. McMahon responded there are no matching requirements under the grant. The factors that they judge the different applications that come to the state is how much private sector investment is being done simultaneously with the application. The fact that they've already incurred costs in the purchase and some of the work they've already been doing they will include that in the narrative of the application to demonstrate there is skin in the game on the private sector part. There is no requirement for the town to invest any of its money in this project to move forward with the grant application.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Pelkey to approve the submittal of an Assessment-Only grant application to the Department of Economic and Community Development for \$200,000 for environmental assessment at 92 Deerfield Road on behalf of 92 Deerfield Road LLC.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- b) Present overview of potential grant application to the CT Recreational Trails Program for a segment of multi-use trail north of the Wilson Boat Launch

Suzanne Choate, Town Engineer, and Patrick McMahon, Economic Development Director, stated the town has a current Recreational Trails grant from the State of CT for the planning and design of a multi-use trail between the Wilson Boat launch and the Windsor Center River Trail. The envisioned trail route would traverse the Windsor Meadows State Park and Loomis Chaffee School property. Design work is underway to fully design and permit the portion of the trail that would go through Windsor Meadows State Park to the southern end of the Loomis Chaffee property and to prepare conceptual level layout plans to assist in discussions with Loomis Chaffee School officials.

Permitting for the Windsor Meadows State Park portion could potentially be secured by the end of calendar year 2024 or shortly thereafter.

Town staff recently met with State DEEP officials and were encouraged to submit an application for the portion of the trail through Windsor Meadows State Park as DEEP likes to fund construction projects that received planning grant dollars and due to the fact that the trail encompasses a regional greenway. The grant program requires a 20% local match.

The proposed project would connect to a section of existing trail constructed between the Wilson Boat Launch and Meadow Road and to the future Riverfront Recapture park system on the Windsor/Hartford border. The project also connects to the Captain John Bissell Trail across the bridge into South Windsor and trail systems beyond. The trail will provide access and overlooks the picturesque Connecticut River.

We will be presenting a request to the Town Council in early March to authorize submitting a grant application. DEEP is anticipated to make grant award announcements in May.

Ms. Choate stated the portion they are looking at for the grant is from the initial point at I-291 to the southern edge of Loomis Chaffee. They have done a preliminary concept design on the northern trail. They are currently in the data gathering portion of the project, determining wetland soils and doing some surveying. The path will meander along toward the river where possible and will take advantage of grades as best as possible. There are possible archeological sites that we may need to be aware of as well.

Mr. McMahon added we have a consultant here tonight, Galen Sempredon, from East-West Engineering, in case questions arise and he cannot answer them. East-West Engineering has provided an estimate with a contingency of approximately \$900,000 to bring the trail just short of a decision point for potential future routing through the Loomis Chaffee campus. The grant program does require a 20% local match. This would represent a \$720,000 grant application to the state with a \$180,000 local match. Grant awards are expected in May. If the town were approved, it could be up to 6 months for the grant agreement to be executed. Grants that are awarded would have a typical 3 year time frame to complete the project. We aren't asking for any action this evening. We are planning on having a public information session likely sometime next week or before the March 4th Town Council meeting to inform the public where we stand with the project. That will be an important consideration for the state when they are reviewing the applications. The criteria in which they rate in rank is very favorable for the town. This is part of a greenway as we're a part of the CT River greenway. It's essentially a regional project potentially connecting trails in Hartford and utilizing the Bissell Bridge over to South Windsor, you'll be able to access trails on the east side of the CT river. From that perspective, this would rank very highly.

Mr. McMahon continued by saying that they've had to approach the State of Connecticut parks division as the town would need a letter stating they would be willing to have this enhancement to their property for the grant application. It is state ownership as it is a

state park, but it's really the towns and the communities in this area that are making the request to install this enhancement. The majority of it would be state funds, but a portion of it would be local. He, Ms. Choate and other engineering staff and the consulting engineer have walked the site. We are hoping there will be some great overlooks of the river. There will be great parking at the boat launch for this.

Ms. Choate added that the path is 10 feet wide, it's a multi-use path that is paved. The expectation is the permitting process will happen in May and it will be through that permitting process by the end of the year.

Mr. McMahan added that with construction comes a maintenance requirement. We do maintain the portion of the trail that has already been installed from the boat launch to Meadow Road which entails clearing any obstructions off the trail and such. This will be the same provision for the newer portion of the trail.

Councilor Eleveld said this runs across multiple state properties. There is a large portion that is state land. Why isn't the state helping out with the costs since a large part of it is their land? Mr. McMahan stated that this was a request by our locality to make this enhancement to their state park. This could be a consideration for the state. There is also the Eversource property. We have been in communication with Eversource to have the engineers go out to make an assessment and to ultimately have an easement across their property for recreational purposes.

Councilor Eleveld stated one of his concerns is it appears that the path is about a mile long. His concern is for the residents on Sinclair and Joshua Hill because they are up the hill. His concern is that someone is going to walk to the end of the path and then go through the neighborhood backyards to get to the street. Where are we relative to expanding the path all the way through to the center because you're looking at a mile to go back and maybe going to the center would be a shorter distance? Mr. McMahan stated they have had preliminary discussions with Loomis Chaffee officials and with the engineering consultant that the river route, according to the State DEEP, would likely be more difficult from a permitting stand point. There is a pinch point by the Loomis Chaffee property that they will be worried about on the northern end, near their physical plant. It's a thin area. We would more than likely have to construct a boardwalk type system down by the river to bypass that section. The railroad route might be the preferable one. No decisions have been made as they are only at discussion levels. We do still have some space in this planning grant to move forward with some higher level design work through the Loomis Chaffee property. Within the next 6-9 months, his hope is that he will have better answers for Councilor Eleveld as to the routing through the Loomis Chaffee school. Funding would be approximately \$2 million either way without contingencies. They've had conversations with the State DOT and they have a bike/ped division and are interested in seeing some of these projects of regional significance come to completion. We are hopeful that the DOT would step up to the plate on a future funding request.

Councilor Eleveld asked for the people on Sinclair and Joshua Hill, will a fence be put up? Mr. McMahon responded that it's quite a well treed area on the west side of the railroad tracks through the backyards of all of those properties. There is no obvious pathway to go back to those residential properties. He believes that the railroad track is somewhat elevated in good portions of it. Our hope would be that most people would just turn back around at the end of the path and head back to the parking lot where they may have parked.

Galen Sempredon, Sr. Project Engineer of East-West Engineering, added that he walked extensively along the area. There is a lot of heavy overgrowth. There are just a few spots where you can readily get in there. There is an MDC sewer line through there which does have a clear path through. There are a couple of openings where you can get through the dense prickers to get to the railroad, but then you have to climb over and then you're dealing with the prickers on the other side. He doesn't feel there would be that much of a tendency to try and get through there. Councilor Eleveld then said that there is somewhat of a natural fence (with the prickers) there.

Councilor Naeem wanted to clarify that if the grant went through, the state would be funding 80% of the costs. Is that correct? Mr. McMahon stated that was correct.

Councilor Pelkey said as a Deerfield resident he is concerned about David Circle, Portland, Sinclair, Midian, and Seymour Circle. He is thinking about it from a crime perspective. Until we complete something further on, this seems to him as a great location for crime, as they are a mile up at a dead end. We already know the boat launch has been problematic. At the end of all of those streets, citizens are concerned as to what people may do along that MDC right of way. Without any way to police that area, you might have activity going on in there that does make it across into the Deerfield neighborhood. He doesn't see anything in the details for policing. As much as he likes the idea of a trail, he sees it as a problem. Maybe you can speak about this tonight in making sure that doesn't happen. He's also concerned about the cost of maintenance and who is going to maintain it. His other concern is that we do not have the land yet that we need for the path and funding is being requested by the Town Council for the project. If we don't have the land, why are we pursuing this? He looks at this request and we don't have a finalized plan with it yet. We don't know which route we are going to take. He doesn't have a problem with the trail, but he feels in many ways we have not gone through and finalized the plan. He feels this project is a 'want'. He also feels if this is something that the state wants, which it seems to be, they are going to give us money at some later point. Let's get a plan together and do it all at once. Let's think through this as much as possible so we don't end up with a mess on our hands. As much as he'd like to vote for this, at this point he cannot because he has so many concerns. Mr. McMahon stated that he would like to take his comments under advisement this evening and come back on March 4th with a little more detail as to the cost of the maintenance. They'll have to discuss the safety of the trail and the concerns that the residents have brought up. He said there are just so many times that the state provides the opportunity for funding and we thought this would be a good opportunity to seize on one of those opportunities knowing that likely it will have to be a phased project because of the overall cost of the

project. We received some initial feedback from the DEEP that they were inviting this application for this segment. They feel it is worthy in and of itself for application. We wanted to bring that forth to the Council as an opportunity to discuss it.

Mayor Black-Burke stated this item was brought before the Council for discussion purposes tonight. She is looking forward to what they bring back to the Council during their March 4th meeting.

- c) Authorize the submittal of grant applications to the LOTCIP program for pavement rehabilitation projects on Marshall Phelps Road and Prospect Hill Road

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Naeem that staff is authorized to submit grant applications to the Capital Region Council of Governments for the following projects under the Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program, Marshall Phelps Road Rehabilitation and Prospect Hill Road Rehabilitation.

Suzanne Choate, Town Engineer, stated in order to further our pavement management program, town staff has reviewed several roadway reconstruction/rehabilitation projects to determine which will score favorably utilizing CRCOG's rating criteria. Based on that criteria, it was determined that grant applications be submitted for the following two projects: 1) Marshal Phelps Road and 2) Prospect Hill Road.

Marshall Phelps Road from Bloomfield Avenue to Day Hill Road (approximate length is 6,000'): The road is classified as a minor arterial roadway. The Town's most recent pavement evaluations, conducted by our consulting engineer, indicates an average pavement condition index (PCI) of 72 with a range between 70 and 76 (out of 100) on the roadway. The proposed project application includes bike lanes within pavement in the existing shoulder area in both directions of travel.

Prospect Hill Road from Day Hill Road to Lang Road (approximate length is 5,000'). The road is classified as a major collector roadway. The Town's most recent pavement evaluations, conducted by our consulting engineer, indicate an average pavement condition index (PCI) of 69 with a range between 56 and 78 (out of 100) on the roadway.

The LOTCIP program is structured such that the town is financially responsible for the design of the work. The state then funds 100% of the construction phase of the project.

Town staff is preparing grant applications for Marshall Phelps Road Mill and Overlay (Rehabilitation) and Prospect Hill Road Mill and Overlay (Rehabilitation). The proposed projects anticipate milling 2" of asphalt and placing 2" of new asphalt.

Assistant Town Manager Colby added that in respect to the Marshall Phelps project, it includes bike lanes in both directions of travel. There is significant space within the shoulder area, which will allow for a 5 foot bike lane with a 3 foot buffer.

Mayor Black-Burke clarified that the state will be covering all the costs except for the design work which the town will be paying for. Assistant Town Manager Colby said that was correct. The project costs for construction is covered under the LOTCIP program and the town would be requested to cover the costs for the design of the project, which is \$60,000 for Marshall Phelps and \$50,000 for Prospect Hill. If the grant awards are expected to be determined in the spring, we would anticipate that construction would take place in the summer of 2025.

Councilor Naeem said for these two particular roads. What was the process we went through in identifying them versus other roads? Ms. Choate stated the DOT is looking for a road that is a collector or arterial road because they are looking for a wider scope of road that has an impact to the region, not just the town. Local roads are not eligible for LOTCIP grants. So we can only evaluate collector or arterial roads.

Mayor Black-Burke wanted to find out the costs that the town has to pay for design fees. Where would that be coming from? Assistant Town Manager Colby said we would have to have further discussion on where that money would come from as we aren't going to be discussing that this evening. It would be just the town approving to submit the application. If the town is awarded that grant, we would then come back with that information.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

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

Motion Passed 7-2-0 (Councilor Eleveld and Councilor Pelkey against)

d) Approve funding for the replacement of Police Department crime scene vehicle

MOVED by Councilor Armstrong, seconded by Councilor Walker to authorize the Police Department to purchase a Crime Scene Response Vehicle and associated crime scene processing equipment utilizing \$105,000 in expected vacancy savings within the Police Department's Fiscal Year 2024 General Fund Budget, \$60,000 in Federal Asset Forfeiture Funds, and of \$45,000 in Police Private Duty Funds.

Donald Melanson, Chief of Police, and Heather LaRock, Captain, stated the police department has been researching options to replace the crime scene van and update needed equipment to process complex crime scenes. This van would store a plethora of equipment that assists in identifying, collecting and preserving evidence at crime scenes. It also would carry tools and lighting to assist detectives at many different types of incidents.

These specialized supplies and equipment are a significant financial investment. A Crime Scene Response Vehicle is designed to carry and store this equipment to provide an organized and efficient response by our detectives.

A new crime scene response vehicle would provide:

- Extensive storage for the equipment listed above
- Power generator
- Refrigerator for evidence storage
- Two interior workstations
- Awning for protected exterior work
- Exterior scene lighting

After conducting research, a committee comprised of supervisory and detective personnel, determined that a high top transit style van would best meet the needs as a replacement vehicle. They also conducted a review of current supplies and equipment and developed a list of equipment needed to ensure they have the necessary tools to properly process scenes.

Deputy Mayor Klase wanted to understand. When you talked to West Hartford did you talk about the costs of that van and how are you going to include it in the budget going forward? Chief Melanson stated they are getting a gas powered vehicle. It is not a specialized vehicle that requires a lot of maintenance. It's a general maintenance type vehicle. We do have funds in the Police Department budget to pay for maintenance.

Councilor Eleveld asked what are our savings economically on manpower wise? Does a van like this provide our officers and detectives at a crime scene with needed equipment and does it speed the evidence collecting process, etc.? Chief Melanson said having all the equipment stored in one vehicle makes it very efficient. Even though we don't have detectives working 24/7 which is patrol, we do have detectives on call 24/7. Presently, detectives would have to go to the station and pick up the equipment they think they might need at the crime scene. If they don't have the equipment they need, they need to send someone to go back to the station to pick up that equipment. With the van, all the equipment they may need is there. Therefore, you are saving time and manpower.

Councilor Pelkey asked about the Federal Asset Forfeiture Funds. Do we have a specific amount of money in that bucket? Chief Melanson said that fund has not grown in quite a while. There is presently about \$80,000 in the fund and it's been in that fund for 10 years. We've had this fund earmarked for quite a while anticipating one day that we might have to use it for this type of purchase.

Councilor Pelkey asked about the Private Duty Fund as well. What sort of a percentage are we talking about? Chief Melanson responded the Private Duty Fund is used for having officers do private work such as being at construction job sites and special duty events. We charge the contractors for that and there's a built in administrative fee for that and the vehicle usage. Officer salaries to do that work is placed in this fund and they are paid from it. Every two years, we purchase vehicles from that fund. There is usually \$500-\$600,000 in the fund.

Councilor Armstrong said there was some concerns about the financial status of the van at the Finance Committee meeting and it looks like Chief Melanson went to work and

found that to be a positive for us. She thanked him for that as there will be no impact on the budget. Hopefully as we go forward we can do some collaborating. She thanked him for the statistics and hard work that h does and thanked him for the report tonight.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

13) RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS – None

14) MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS

MOVED by Councilor Pelkey, seconded by Councilor Eleveld to table the minutes for the Regular Town Council meeting of February 5, 2024 until March 4, 2024.

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

a) Minutes of the February 5, 2024 Public Hearing

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Naeem to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2024 Public Hearing as presented.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Gluck Hoffman to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2024 Regular Town Council meeting as presented.

Mayor Black-Burke stated there was a correction to the minutes under item 12A, for the motion to Act on a resolution calling for an immediate de-escalation and permanent ceasefire in Israel and Palestine. Councilor Armstrong's name is listed twice in the 'yes' column.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman stated that there were a few individuals in public comment that did not have addresses and there were some individuals that did not have many of their comments listed. Also, she is wondering if on Page 4, the caller 'Elmo' can be eliminated or stricken from the record.

Mayor Black-Burke stated in regards to the 'Elmo' caller, she believes that is part of the record and it should stay within the minutes. If we remove it that would not be a reflection of what occurred during the meeting.

Assistant Town Manager Colby stated we can review the minutes and make sure for those that have missing addresses that they had provided those or if they were not clear on the record for the recording. We'll try to make sure that we can identify those.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase to rescind the motion to table the approval of the February 5, 2024 Regular Town Council minutes. No second.

Deputy Mayor Klase stated for clarification. She said we made a motion to approve the minutes for the Regular Town Council meeting, we've taken some changes to those minutes and those will be made, so that means that we need to table the motion. Is that right?

Mayor Black-Burke stated until the actual corrections are made she doesn't think they can move to approve the minutes.

Councilor Naeem said we may want to give some direction to the staff on how to take public comment. In past meetings, we usually do see they summarize what was said and she believes that was what was intended to happen. She recognizes there were a lot of things said that folks would like to have reflected here so just moving forward you might want to take note on do we want the transcription, which is not what is usually provided, or do we want a summarization of the minutes which since she's been on the Council is what she's been seeing.

Mayor Black-Burke shared that it's been past practice for someone to stay at the meetings in the Council Chambers and they would take the minutes almost like a transcription.

Councilor Eleveld stated there were many people that spoke at the February 5th meeting. We have the video and he'd like to suggest in respect to this meeting because of the sheer length and complexity of some of the comments that the most efficient approach might be to state if they spoke for or against the resolution and then a time stamp off of the video so someone can actually go look at the video if they want to hear what the person specifically said.

Councilor Armstrong said as her expertise as a transcriptionist and taking minutes it is possible that they could not pick up what was being said because of what was going on. So there is another way that it can be worded in the minutes that it was not audible. She doesn't think we will be getting it verbatim, word by word as things were going on in the Chambers. That is her recommendation.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman does not disagree with Councilor Armstrong and she has taken transcription in court and in meetings. We did summarize some of the folks, but we didn't summarize everybody. That's her point is that the summarization of most of them are not there at all. If we are going to summarize just some of them, we should summarize all of them.

Mayor Black-Burke spoke of conduct on the dais. While they are in debate, at the end of the day we might not agree, but she thinks all of them want the same thing to come out of this—that there's an accurate reflection of what occurred on February 5, 2024.

MOVED by Councilor Naeem, seconded by Councilor Armstrong to table the minutes for the Regular Town Council of February 5, 2024 meeting until March 4, 2024.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- b) Minutes of the February 5, 2024 Regular Town Council meeting – TABLED (see above for motion)

15) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Adam Gutcheon, 19 Mechanic Street stated he wanted to speak about the craft of chairmanship. He has chaired many difficult meetings and had to handle many unruly and even abusive crowds. He had to deal with rageaholics who wouldn't stop ranting and sit down. He's had to deal with far-left activists trying to provoke him into trespassing them and calling the police so they can get a photo of their oppression. He has had the benefit in all of those cases of time, room and space to get his 'sea legs' and come online with the rules of those organizations and the tradition and culture of those organizations. He's also been attending Town Council meetings since Fran Brady was the Mayor. In that time, the tone and nature of American politics and political discourse has only gotten courser and it's gotten angrier particularly over the last 15 years. No Mayor in 22 years has had a baptism of fire as overt and profound as the first new face sitting in that center chair has had over the last few months. No Mayor has had a raging maniac charge the dais as happened a couple of months ago. And of course, we've never had anything like the February 5th meeting. No Mayor has borne the kind of rage that has been directed at this dais generally over the last 3-4 months and at her specifically as she has. There may be a number of reasons for this but again, the nature and tone of political discourse in this country has gotten so much angrier. He hopes that you would extend her that grace, that time and that room. He hopes they will make appropriate modifications to their Rules of Order to preserve decorum to keep pace with these changes in political discourse. If in the maintenance of the rights and privileges of the Council and its members she may inadvertently fall into error, he hopes they will raise a timely point of order so it can be remedied.

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Naeem to enter Executive Session at 11:07 p.m. for the purpose of:

- a) Strategy and negotiations with respect to collective bargaining (Windsor UPSEU - Dispatchers)

Motion Passed 9-0-0

16) EXECUTIVE SESSION

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



Staff: Scott Colby, Assistant Town Manager; Amelia Bliss, Human Resources Director; Donald Melanson, Chief of Police

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

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Armstrong to exit Executive Session at 11:26 p.m. and return to the Regular Town Council meeting.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

17) ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councilor Pelkey, seconded by Councilor Armstrong to adjourn the meeting at 11:26 p.m.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Helene Albert
Recording Secretary