



**TOWN COUNCIL**  
**HYBRID MEETING – VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON**  
**October 21, 2024**  
**Regular Town Council Meeting**  
**Council Chambers**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

**1) CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Black-Burke called the meeting to order at 7:42 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 (virtual), and Councilor Walker

**2) PRAYER OR REFLECTION**

Councilor Armstrong led the group in prayer/reflection.

**3) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Councilor Armstrong led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4) PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS - None**

**5) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS**

Pat Gardner, 80 White Rock, said she'd like to recognize the Mayor who came and participated in the Windsor Freedom Trail this year. It was appreciated. The Archer Memorial AME Zion Church along with their collaborators the Windsor Freedom Trail and Central Connecticut State University Anthropology Department Field school, have collaborated on a project at the Archer Memorial AME Zion Church, which is an archeological dig. They invite all those who are interested to join them on Saturday, October 26, 2024, from 1:00 PM-2:30 PM in the Town Hall Council Chambers. They will be providing a presentation of the experience from the archeological dig that was done in June of this summer. Those attending will have the opportunity to learn about the experience that they had, learn about the process and also view a display of artifacts that were discovered on site. She wanted to emphasize the amount of work that the kids from CT State University put into this project. They worked very hard and were diligent. They will also have an opportunity at the presentation to speak about their experiences as well.

## 6) COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilor Eleveld said two weekends ago we had a good turnout at the Chili Fest. The town's constable, Charles Jackson III, won for the best chili. On that day, we had the Chili Fest, the Lion's Club arts and craft fair, there was a rummage sale at Grace Episcopal Church, there was plant sale by the Garden Club and a tag sale by the historical society.

Councilor Smith stated he did not have any current updates.

Councilor Pelkey said when folks come to early voting it is slightly different than the usual vote process so he asks that everyone be patient. October is Fire Prevention month. There was a presentation at the last Town Council meeting regarding that. The goal is to not have any fires. If you are interested or if you know of anyone that is interested in joining the Volunteer Fire Department, feel free to contact any of the councilors, call town hall or visit [windsorfire.org](http://windsorfire.org) to apply and get more information.

Councilor Naeem reminded all the viewers that early voting is in effect from 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM. This is a great opportunity to plan ahead and make sure you have a plan to go out and vote.

Councilor Armstrong said there's a lot of activities in Windsor. October is Breast Cancer Awareness month as well. Take care of yourselves. Self-care is a valuable for all of us.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman said last week there was the opportunity to meet the candidates which was sponsored by the Windsor League of Women Voters. She thanked them as it was a great event.

Councilor Walker said he'd like to talk about the turf fields. One of the people who put turf at the high school along with lights at the high school was former Councilor Broxterman. When he and Councilor Broxterman were canvassing the neighborhood to get the neighbors to vote for lights and artificial turf, he wasn't that quiet. It was two of them out of five people on the Council that pushed that. Early voting is important. Please vote.

Deputy Mayor Klase said the chili fest was a wonderful event. However, she did hear from some of the residents that the timing, which was around Yom Kippur, was on the same day. It might be a consideration to think about the highest of holidays for some of our residents and how we plan events.

Mayor Black-Burke said the entire Town Council was invited to visit Birchwood Farms after their first meeting in October. Several councilors took that opportunity to go visit the farm. It was great to see all the work that has been done and to see the trees. Windsor has so many gems such as Brown's Harvest, Birchwood Farms and Northwest Park to name a few. It's always good to know that there are so many great places here in our town to visit. Be sure that you have a voting plan. Use your voice to vote.

## 7) REPORT OF APPOINTED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

### a) Public Building Commission

Rich Hazelton, Public Building Commission, stated the following:

#### **Wilson Fire Station – Roof Replacement - 9585**

Bids have been received and the contract has been awarded. Construction is scheduled to begin in late October or early November. Project expected to be completed by the end of December 2024.

#### **Oliver Ellsworth School Humidity Mitigation Design - 9574**

Construction is substantially complete. We continue to finish up punch list items and minor adjustments. Project is expected to be completed by the end of November 2024.

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

Construction is substantially complete. Final punch list items are being addressed and completed. Project expected to be completed by the end of November 2024.

#### **Milo Peck School HVAC Construction – 9538**

Nothing new to report.

#### **Clover Street School Roof Replacement Project – 9549**

Nothing new to report.

#### **LP Wilson Community Center HVAC Renovations Project - 9551**

##### **Phase - 1**

Construction is substantially complete. Final adjustments to the RTUs are being performed and punch list items are being addressed. Project expected to be completed by the end of December 2024.

##### **Phase - 2**

Construction is roughly 90% complete. Classroom areas are substantially complete and administration areas will be completed by the end of October 2024.

#### **330 Windsor Ave. Community Center Gym HVAC Renovations - 9550**

Nothing new to report.

#### **Clover Street School Restroom ADA Code Compliances Phase-1 - 9552**

Construction and punch list items are completed. We are installing some additional door closers at which point this project should be fully completed. Project expected to be completed by the end of November 2024.

**LP Wilson BOE Restroom Renovations - 9553**

Design is substantially complete with minor refinements being addressed. Bid will be scheduled over the winter with construction anticipated over the 2025 summer break.

**Sage Park Middle School Roof Design Project – 9541**

Construction is substantially completed and punch list items are being addressed. Project expected to be completed by the end of November 2024.

**Poquonock Elementary School Roof Project - 9558**

The BOE is in the process of submitting the request for the State of CT grant. Once submitted, we will be waiting for approval from the State before we can proceed any further.

**JFK Elementary School HVAC System Upgrades Phase III Project - 1932**

Final punch list items have been reviewed and minor repairs have been requested from the contractor. This work should be completed within the next two weeks. Project is expected to be completed by the end of October 2024.

**Welch Park Pool House Renovations Project - 1938**

Construction is substantially completed. Punch list review meeting was performed and contractor is addressing final punch list items. Project is expected to be completed by the end of December 2024.

Councilor Pelkey said in regards to the Wilson Fire station, there were some concerns regarding icing on the roof and there might have been some underlying causes related to the roof replacement. Have there been any further investigation into this? Mr. Hazelton stated he believes they have been trying to get a resolution for that problem.

Deputy Mayor Klase echoed Councilor Pelkey's sentiments. It seems that it's not a normal thing but finding the cause for that issue is important as other fire department roofs are the same as this one. Mr. Hazelton stated that the Commission did have some discussion on that. Mr. Marco Aglieco, Facilities Manager, stated they were at the Wilson Fire Station today to do the kick off meeting with the contractor. They went above the attic to take a look at the condition and what may be causing it. They confirmed that everything was built per the plan specs. From the original design there was a proper ventilation and proper bridge vents on top, so at this point, they are still investigating what can be the cause of it. Maybe the vents are clogged and just need to be cleaned. They'll be installing additional bridge venting on the top. The next thing to look at would be the powered exhaust fan for that area. We decided to not go with the electric tables to prevent the ice.

b) Wilson/Deerfield Advisory Committee

Charles Jackson, Wilson/Deerfield Advisory Committee, gave the following report:

Throughout the year, Wilson/Deerfield Advisory Committee has engaged in conversations with staff and representatives from the Town of Windsor and community organizations.

These meetings have continued to provide the space for committee members to learn about town initiatives, services and internal procedures, to share concerns and visions for their neighborhoods, and to explore ways to collaborate with external community organizations.

The Wilson/Deerfield Advisory Committee (WDAC) met with the Wilson Library Branch Manager to better understand the library services, to provide feedback on current programs and outreach methods, and to explore ways to use the library as a resource for future committee needs.

The Committee invited Mayor Black-Burke to discuss ways in which the WDAC can be helpful to the Town Council and town staff, determine ways for Council to support WDAC's endeavors, and discuss the future of the Wilson neighborhood with the new park being built.

Through a guest speaker representing an engineering firm contracted by the Town, the committee was updated on the Windsor River Trail extension efforts and informed about the processes and considerations taken into account during the design and planning phases of such a project.

Committee members also got the chance to meet at the old Wilson Firehouse and learn about the history and significance of the building and how the delivery of emergency services has evolved with time.

This year, WDAC also invited the Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce to explore ways to collaborate. At this meeting, the committee learned about the Chamber's outreach initiatives in the Wilson neighborhood and discussed ways to support local businesses.

During this reporting period, WDAC, through its Beatification Subcommittee continued to make efforts to improve the community. The committee hosted the yearly Wilson Deerfield Earth Day Cleanup event. This year, cleanup routes were expanded to include the Deerfield neighborhood. As in previous years, this event was a success and drew a variety of volunteers that ranged from young families, to youth, to seniors. Additionally, the subcommittee continues to explore different avenues to engage residents and business owners in beautifying their neighborhoods.

The WDAC will have a special meeting next month to discuss issues at 11 Wilson Avenue. The committee was under the impression that the town was taking care of this business and shutting it down. It has not been shut down yet.

c) Metropolitan District Commission

John Avedisian and Gary Johnson, Metropolitan District Commission, gave the following report:

- Human Resources of MDC for 2024 – currently have funding for 447 people, currently filled 430 positions and actively recruiting for 14.

- MDC is doing an environmental study asking current employees with the MDC to see how they are doing, how is management doing, and what they feel needs to change to make it a better place to work.
- Operation Fuel update for the month of September – the MDC received 317 donations totaling around \$617 from customers paying through their bills. When it comes to the Town of Windsor, for the budget starting in year 2023 – 13 people were on the program at a cost of \$5,051. Year to date for 2024 – 30 people are on the program at a cost of \$9,000.
- In August, the sewer operation projected a yield surplus of \$4 million and in August we have a deficit of \$1.1 million. The reason for that is because of the reduction in water production.
- Niagara Bottling – as of 9/30/24 they have used 25 million gallons for the billing period between 8/30/24 and 9/30/24 with an average of about 818,000 gallons per day.
- The reservoirs - they are at about 96% in one reservoir and 94% in the other.
- Landfill - The discharge for the landfill has decreased in the amount of gallons going into the sewer system. To date, the balance due by DEEP to MDC is about \$23 million. We have now received approval from the legislature to go to court and sue DEEP for the money they owe us. You had to go through the legislature to get them to approve it and they have done that.
- MDC is replacing laterals, from the house to the road and up to \$10,000 at their cost, provided it has been approved and permitted by the MDC. MDC is going back and forth on how far back they can go to help their customers who have a lateral that has to be replaced. They'd rather replace the whole lateral than just part of it. If we go back six months, that adds another \$500,000 onto the cost. They look at the permits that were pulled for the years past to get an idea of what the average yearly permit was, the quantity and then they multiply it out times \$10,000. If they go a year, it will be \$1.1 million added onto the cost, if they go two years, it will be about \$2 million. The issue is where do they do the cut off.
- Budget – 2024-2025 – the ad valorem will not have an increase but if it goes up at all it will be a very slight increase. It's not yet been voted on.
- Installation of water meters – water meters are in the house that run manually or electronically. Those water meters will be taken out of the house and placed in the front yard where MDC will be able to electronically read the meter without having to go inside the house.

- If everybody read *The Journal Inquirer*, there is lead testing that is going to be required through DEEP and EPA. The article was in the paper. They will be sending out notifications to tell everyone what is going on and what needs to be done if you think you have lead pipes. Mr. Johnson added that there were very few that they've found in the whole system of 400,000 users. They do have about 15% that they can't verify one way or the other. They don't feel there is going to be many but they will be reaching out to those people that haven't verified that they have lead. If that section is found to have lead, MDC will replace it.
- PFAS – we have zero PFAS in the MDC water.
- There were two residents in the last two months who contacted Jane Garibay and then Jane contacted him (John Avedisian). Up at Poquonock a person had their sewer system in the back of their house which went out and they needed to connect it to the main system. They were having a difficult time getting some telephone numbers and getting some answers. They resolved that issue.

The other issue was on Kennedy Road where this person had a very bad issue in her house where the lady actually ended up in the hospital with CO<sub>2</sub> poisoning. They thought it was because MDC was doing work out on the street. MDC came out as soon as he called them. They went in and took a look. They found out it wasn't anything MDC did. He contacted a few people who are contractors and he found out that they put in a new furnace and the furnace exit gases were going towards the windows into the house. Since she didn't have air conditioning, this person had opened all her windows and the gas was going into her house.

Councilor Eleveld asked about the laterals and why they need to be replaced. Mr. Avedisian stated that many times a lateral can have roots and things growing in and out of it, etc. Councilor Eleveld asked if the homeowner has the responsibility of taking care of the lateral? Mr. Avedisian said yes but they are finding that because of damage, it is usually easier for MDC to go and do it themselves instead of someone else doing it. This is mainly because when they come down to the end of where the street connection is, they might hit something there and it will cost MDC even more to fix that instead of going out themselves. MDC is doing it that way as it will save them some money.

Councilor Eleveld asked about moving the meters from inside the house to the outside of the house. He thought there was an electronic reader on those. Why do you need to move them to outside of the house? Mr. Avedisian stated some of them have it and some of them don't. The basic thing is that you can't get into the houses, so they're trying to make it where they don't have to worry about that so they can get to the meter if there's an issue and be able to read the meter.

Deputy Mayor Klase asked regarding the laterals, is the town or the MDC paying for the maintenance costs? Mr. Avedisian said the MDC is paying for it up to \$10,000 per house.



Deputy Mayor Klase asked what if your lateral connection has been there for 10-15 years, how would you know if there is a problem with it? Mr. Avedisian said you will be aware as your sewer will back up.

Councilor Armstrong asked if there was a cap on this lateral that needs to be replaced by a homeowner? Mr. Avedisian said it pays up to \$10,000. From \$10,000 on, the homeowner would be responsible for it. As a reminder, that \$10,000 is granted if the lateral was permitted and approved by the MDC.

Councilor Armstrong asked if this is done from the street to the house. Is that something that is dug up and repaired. Mr. Johnson stated they would connect to where the service comes into the main pipe in the street back to the house. If they have to dig up the street to do that, then it would need to be done.

Councilor Pelkey said he is on automatic billing so he doesn't get any of the educational materials unless it comes in his mailbox. There may be a lot of people who miss this because they are like me. He gave an example stating there is some work being done on his street and he did get something in his mailbox which stated they said they would be replacing the meters. It never happened. It happened on the further end of his street but he's not 100% sure about that. He feels that spending the time to send those notices took time and resources that could have been used for something else and since it didn't go the right people, they were left not understanding why their meter was not taken care of.

Councilor Gluck-Hoffman said she went to her house one night and it was all marked up. All of the lines go to her house in the street. They had to dig up her lawn and the MDC did a wonderful job putting it back together and it looks beautiful. She thanked them for all the work they did.

Councilor Walker said you described having an electronic water meter in the front yard. For instance, his water meter got moved from the inside of the house to the front of the house. Will there still be a need to move that from the front of the house to the street? Mr. Avedisian said to his understanding, it's supposed to be put in the front yard near the street for easy access. This is from taking it from inside your house to outside for easy access. Councilor Walker restated his question. Mr. Avedisian said he cannot answer that as he doesn't have the answer. He'd have to talk to MDC staff to see what they would do in that circumstance. He will look into it and let Councilor Walker know.

Mayor Black-Burke asked if Mr. Avedisian could give his cliff notes to the Town Council as the Council likes to make their own notes from those. Mr. Avedisian said he would do that.

## **8) TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

Assistant Town Manager Colby gave the following overview of the report:





### **Windsor's 2024 Leaf Collection Program**

The 2024 residential leaf collection program begins on Monday, October 28<sup>rd</sup> and will end on Friday, December 20<sup>th</sup>. During this eight-week period, your bagged leaves will be picked up on the same day as your trash pick-up.

Residents need to place their leaves at the curb in 30 to 40 gallon paper leaf bags. Leaves may also be placed in similar-sized containers that are labeled with a "Leaves Only" sticker that can be easily identified by the driver (i.e., the sticker facing the road). Residents can obtain these stickers at the Town Clerk's Office or the Windsor Transfer Station.

In Windsor, the transfer station accepts residents' leaves at no charge and uses them to produce compost. Leaves must be clean and not contain other items that will compromise the quality of the mulch that will be created. These items include grass clippings, branches, or other items.

If you choose to self-haul your leaves to the transfer station, there is no charge during this period for dropping off clean loads of leaves, (no contaminants or plastic bags).

The transfer station accepts leaves Mondays and Fridays from 8:00 AM to 2:45 PM, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10:00 AM to 2:45 PM, and Saturdays from 8:00 AM to 3:45 PM. Residents should arrive at least 15 minutes prior to closing to allow sufficient time to unload their vehicles. The Windsor Transfer Station is closed on Thursday and Sunday. It is located at 500 Huckleberry Road in Windsor. If you have any questions regarding recycling or composting in Windsor, please call the Transfer Station at 860- 285-1833.

### **Nightmare on Broad Street**

First Town Downtown and Windsor Federal Savings will once again be sponsoring Nightmare on Broad Street in Windsor Center on October 31, 2024 from 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM. Businesses will be giving out treats to the youngsters. There will be hay rides and more! Broad Street from Batchelder Road to Palisado and Poquonock Ave will be closed to traffic. For more information call 860-247-8982 or go to [www.firsttowndowntown.org](http://www.firsttowndowntown.org).

### **November 5<sup>th</sup> is Presidential Election Day**

All seven of Windsor polling locations will be open from 6:00 AM to 8:00 PM. Voters will cast their ballot for President, U.S. Senator, U.S. Representative, State Senator, State Representative and Registrar of Voters.

Early Voting is an available option for voters beginning October 21<sup>st</sup> through November 3<sup>rd</sup>. The polling location for Early Voting is Town Hall, Ludlow Room, first floor. Polling hours are 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM daily with extended hours of 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Tuesday, October 29<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Same Day Registration (SDR) is available throughout the Early Voting period and on Election Day. Same Day Registration enables eligible individuals, who are not currently registered in Windsor, to register and cast a ballot at the same time. Under SDR, an individual may register to vote and cast a ballot on the same day if they meet the eligibility requirements for voting

in Connecticut and are (1) not currently an elector, or (2) currently registered in another municipality but now reside in Windsor.

The Same Day Registration location is Town Hall, Registrar of Voters office, first floor. Same Day Registration hours are the same as Early Voting and Election Day hours.

### **Windsor Health Department Flu Vaccine Clinics**

The Windsor Health Department will be having walk-in flu clinics for standard and high-dose flu vaccines. Please bring all of your insurance cards with you. The clinics will be held on the following dates and times:

- October 29, 2024 – 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM – Wilson Branch Library
- October 30, 2024 – 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM – Windsor Public Library

For more information, go to the Health Department's website at [www.townofwindsorct.com](http://www.townofwindsorct.com)

### **Storytime Spooktacular**

Come join us for a spooktacular storytime at the Wilson Library on October 30 from 10:30 AM – 11:15 AM. We'll read spook stories, sing songs, march in our costumes and 'trick or treat' inside the library! Costumes are encouraged! For ages 0-5.

Councilor Naeem said on the pedestrian crossing, there has been a lot of concern, especially around Geissler's and the speeding in the center of town. You mentioned it is a new standard so it's shifting and people aren't used to it, not knowing what to expect at those pedestrian crosswalks. Is there more information we can put out in town as to what to expect of those crossings, how they work and is there something else that can be done to contact the State about maybe putting up more signage as a heads up? She doesn't think that people understand how it's working and they don't pay attention and come pretty close to some unfortunate situations. Assistant Town Manager Colby said we could work with the town's Public Relations office to produce some information on line as well as through social media and we can also reach out to the State Department of Transportation.

Councilor Eleveld stated that we are basically switching over. The State Department of Transportation (DOT) is requiring us to switch over to New York crossings. In New York city, they walk with the traffic that is running parallel to you. Do you know if they will be putting up any new signage? Assistant Town Manager Colby stated yes, there will be new signage with those signals at each of those intersections that they are making upgrades to. We can also look on DOT's website to see if they have any information on there so we can use it for educational purposes.

## **9) REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

Town Improvements Committee – Councilor Smith – nothing to report.

Finance Committee – Councilor Naeem – nothing to report.



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

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

Personnel Committee – Deputy Mayor Klase – there are some items to review tonight.

**10) ORDINANCES** – None

**11) UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- a) Approve a bond ordinance entitled, “AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$2,330,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE POQUONOCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$2,330,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION.”

RESOLVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Naeem, that the reading into the minutes of the text of the bond ordinance entitled, ‘AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$2,330,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE POQUONOCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$2,330,000 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 \$2,330,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE POQUONOCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECT; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$2,330,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION.”

Assistant Town Manager Colby said this is to replace 67,000 square feet of roof which is 25 years old or so. It is proposed to replace all existing roof sections at Poquonock Elementary School. Part of this project is being proposed to be funded through the State of CT grant. At the last meeting, there were several resolutions that the Town Council took action on which would allow for the Board of Education to apply for a reimbursement grant in roughly 50% of eligible costs. The plans call for the project to be bid this coming winter through the early spring with construction taking place next summer. The schedule is contingent on if and when the State of Connecticut approves the grant application.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- b) Approve a bond ordinance entitled, “AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$980,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE O’BRIEN STADIUM ATHLETIC FIELD IMPROVEMENTS; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$980,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION.”

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Eleveld, that the reading into the minutes of the text of the ordinance entitled, “AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$980,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE O’BRIEN STADIUM ATHLETIC FIELD IMPROVEMENTS; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$980,000 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 Walker to introduce an ordinance entitled, “AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$980,000 FOR COSTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE O’BRIEN STADIUM ATHLETIC FIELD IMPROVEMENTS; AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$980,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION.”

Assistant Town Manager Colby said this item was introduced at the last Town Council meeting as well. This is to propose a replacement of the synthetic turf field at O’Brien stadium. This project was last completed in 2014. The turf has reached its projected life span and is in need of replacement. It is part of the capital improvements plan and is included in the FY 25 schedule. The Engineering Department has evaluated the product and pricing from a number of companies through the CREC marketplace. Vendors in the marketplace have been chosen in accordance with the approved purchasing regulations.

Assistant Town Manager Colby said there were some items brought forth at the last meeting. He gave an explanation of each item as follows:

- One item brought forth at the last meeting was in regards to injuries on the turf field. We have spoken with the Risk Manager who has notified him that there have been no known injuries from the existing turf field over the last five years that have caused burns.
- Some concerns in regards to environmental issues were brought up. According to the manufacturer, the products that are being proposed, the artificial grass itself, the infield, and the shock pad are not made with PFAS chemicals. The supplier also takes measures to make sure that those substances are not added to their products through material design, production as well as through their supplier controls.
- Staff has looked at what the cost would be if we were to revert back to a natural grass field. In order for us to do that work, we would need to remove the base that is currently

there. There would be some substantial drainage work as well. The project can be anywhere between \$1.1 million - \$1.3 million depending upon that drainage. If we go with a certain drainage type, it impacts the playing size of the field which would reduce some of the sports that are eligible to play on that field. The maintenance costs which are roughly right now with the synthetic turf field at approximately \$18,000 per year would have to be increased to \$55,000 per year. That does not include any irrigation or if we were to look at replacing segments with sod just based upon heavy use in that field. There would also have to be a decrease in the usage of the field as well for the sports that are participating on the field along with any of the recreation programs.

- A study was mentioned that was done in Springfield, Massachusetts in regards to their fields. Staff reached out to the city to inquire what they are doing with their athletic programs at their high schools and they are currently using artificial turf fields. They unveiled a new artificial turf field last month at one of their high schools and they are continuing to use those for their athletic programs at their high schools throughout the city.

Mayor Black-Burke stated that this is something that the Town Council has talked about. We've had experts come in and talk to the Council about the turf fields and the rationale as to why. In her opinion, she thinks grass is more dangerous. She is in favor of the town using the artificial turf. Of course we want to make sure we are environmentally sound. She appreciates the comments from the various coaches tonight because they are also concerned. We want to do what is best for our students and ensuring that we are not putting anything out there that can harm them. She is going to vote in favor of the Council going forward with the artificial turf field. She is excited that we can continue to provide this type of campus for the students. It's nice to see the students out there practicing and they have a sense of pride that they have this campus for the Windsor Warriors.

Councilor Naeem said that there were some concerns about the pellets that were used for the field and it being ingested in large amounts could have harmful effects on those using the field. Staff did look into alternatives that would be wood based pellets. Assistant Town Manager Colby confirmed that was an alternative product as an infill that could replace the rubber infill. It is 100% organic, there's no additives nor coating added to the wood based pellets. That product however is fairly new and it wasn't recommended because while the manufacturer is stating that there is a 10 year warranty, they have not been able to see if that has that longevity yet. Councilor Naeem added that is an additional \$35,000 cost. Not knowing if that would reduce the life line of this turf by half, it is a big risk to take.

Councilor Eleveld asked on the economic side of it, we are looking at \$1.3 million to replace it with dirt and grass and another \$50,000 plus a year to maintain it. So, our cost would almost be near \$2 million over the course of 10 years to go back to grass.

Councilor Naeem added that in addition to that, we would have to figure out replacement fields for teams using the field. In example, instead of 7 teams using the field, we'd now have to make it 3 teams. So those other four teams would have to get bussed to the other fields

that need maintenance to be kept up. She thinks it's a little bit harder to estimate, but it would be a little bit more than the \$2 million.

Councilor Eleveld said we are not even counting inflation into these numbers. Yet the artificial turf that we are looking at is just under \$1 million. We heard from the coaches who made it very clear that the artificial turf is a preferred playing surface. He had asked specifically to the coaches if there were any injuries that they are aware of and they said no. However, there would be a greater risk on real grass due to the fact that the ground gets soft and it gets hard. When it's hard, it's really hard and that could be detrimental to our students plus the tremendous use they get. We also heard tonight several people who desire to have a second turf field because these are so heavily used by multiple sports. It's something we may have to look at over the next several years. He appreciates the comments relative to the safety and to the environmental aspects; however, economically, anything that is 'green' usually refers to green out of your pockets in large amounts. He thinks that real grass requires chemicals. He sees no reason why they cannot support this. He will be voting in favor of it. It makes a lot of sense economically, it makes sense for use purposes and it's beneficial to our students to have a potentially safe surface to play on.

Deputy Mayor Klase stated that there was a lot of analysis on this and we also analyzed the environmental concerns. Currently, the Department of Public Health and the EPA have indicated that they are no releases into the environment that are tangible from these fields.

Councilor Walker said he agrees with Mayor Black-Burke.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

## 12) NEW BUSINESS

- a) Approval of Fiscal Year 2024 Open Purchase Orders until January 6, 2025

MOVED by Councilor Naeem, seconded by Councilor Pelkey that the remaining FY 24 General Fund purchase orders totaling \$102,994 be reapproved until January 6, 2025.

Assistant Town Manager Colby stated the Town Council approved eight FY 24 year-end purchase orders totaling \$198,315 on June 17, 2024. As of October 21, 2024 there are three remaining open purchase orders totaling \$102,994. Two of them pertain to compensation and job classification studies that are still in progress. The third purchase order is for a DPW vehicle, a Ford F650 flatbed truck, which has been delayed due to shipping and assembly issues with the vendor.

Motion Passed 8-0-0 (Mayor Black-Burke out of the room)

- b) Approve the release of a drainage easement at 458 Windsor Avenue



MOVED by Councilor Naeem, seconded by Councilor Armstrong to approve the release of the Connecticut State Drainage Right-of-Way in favor of a Right to Drain, as well as acceptance of pipe maintenance within said Drainage Right-of-Way at 458 Windsor Avenue.

Assistant Town Manager Colby stated the State of Connecticut has a Drainage Right of Way (DROW) on 458 Windsor Avenue that connects the drainage system on Route 159 to Decker's Brook. Due to the new park construction at this location and its impact on the Drainage Right-of-Way, the State is requiring the town to accept a release of the Drainage Right-of-Way. The State will maintain a right to drain (RTD) only through an existing drainage pipe of which the town will be required to maintain.

Councilor Pelkey asked if we know the current state of the pipe? Has it been recently inspected? What is the status? Assistant Town Manager Colby stated there is nothing in regards to inspections. The department has reviewed the pipe and it is acceptable so they do not see any concerns with it.

Councilor Eleveld stated we are not building anything in the way of structures other than sidewalks are we? Assistant Town Manager Colby stated he does not believe any of the structures go over that. It's just sidewalks that would be closer to Route 159 and the sidewalks towards the back end of it.

Councilor Eleveld said this takes all the water from Route 159 and drains it to Decker's Brook correct? Assistant Town Manager Colby said that is correct.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- c) Approve acceptance of \$20,000 Connecticut Department of Economic & Community Development grant related to senior services

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Naeem that the Town Manager is authorized to accept and expend the grant from the State of Connecticut Department of Economic Development to support and assist senior residents in the amount of \$20,000.

Assistant Town Manager Colby said the town has been awarded a \$20,000 grant by the State of Connecticut Department of Economic Development (DECD) to support and assist residents over the age of 55. In FY 24 the grant amount was \$15,000 and was used to provide free aquatic programming for seniors and expand the partnership with Social Services and the Youth Services Bureau to assist senior property owners with yard maintenance projects.

Paul Norris, Director of Recreation and Leisure Services, said the funds will be used to hire Windsor teens as temporary part-time staff to assist in yard cleanup and beautification of at-risk and home-bound seniors who own their own home and are not able to do the work themselves. Teen participants would be provided a stipend and adult supervision will be provided at each job location. It is anticipated that approximately 20 senior property owners will be assisted.

Funds will also be used to provide adults over the age of 55 with free pool passes to access our pools this summer and offer free swim lessons. We estimate that approximately 568 seniors will be able to get free season passes or swim lessons.

Councilor Armstrong saw that they will be hiring teens. How are they recruited? Mr. Norris responded they have the STEP (summer teen employment program) program and go through the town hiring process. The request for job applications is posted in the middle of March and high school students can then apply to get hired for the STEP program.

Councilor Armstrong asked if there is someone monitoring the teens while they are doing their job. Mr. Norris stated yes, they do just like any of their other programs. For the STEP program we try to maintain a ratio of 1 to 6 between the supervisor and the youth doing the program.

Councilor Armstrong asked if they will get minimum wage? Mr. Norris replied they actually get a stipend for their participation. Another thing we do is we put the teens through a youth development type program where we talk about integrity, how to prepare yourself for the workforce, how to behave in public and deal with positive relationships.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman asked if they can apply this to their community service curriculum that is mandatory in the school? Mr. Norris replied yes they can.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- d) Approve acceptance of \$15,000 Connecticut Department of Economic & Community Development grant related to youth violence prevention

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Smith, that the Town Manager is authorized to accept and expend the grant award from the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development for youth violence prevention in the amount of \$15,000.

Paul Norris, Director of Recreation & Leisure Services, stated funds will be used for free youth access to pools in the summer and free access to the evening teen center at 330 Windsor Avenue Community Center. Grant resources will be also used to support social learning and violence prevention awareness programs across Recreation and the Youth Services bureau after school programs. Social learning programs focus on fostering positive behaviors, emotional regulation, and healthy relationships. Violence prevention Awareness emphasizes recognizing, avoiding and de-escalating violent situations through conflict resolution, empathy, and communications skills.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman said there was a usage of 200 kids for the free pool pass and teen center pass this time around. She asked if Mr. Norris is expecting the number to rise for this

coming season? Mr. Norris said he can't tell at this particular moment if that will or won't happen. We are hoping to do at least 200 again.

Councilor Gluck Hoffman said it's based on registration, correct? Mr. Norris said that is correct.

Councilor Pelkey asked what activities does 330 Windsor Avenue offer for teens? Mr. Norris said along with basketball, which is the number one activity there, the teen center has a pool table, ping pong table, televisions and couches. They are allowed to play video games, read books, or play table top games. We have and will continue to do programs such as family paint night and cupcake chat.

Councilor Pelkey asked if Mr. Norris has seen any movement in pool passes more or less as a result of the free passes? Mr. Norris said there was a slight decrease in family pool passes, but that was expected. By having the free youth passes, the swim lesson participation went up.

Councilor Eleveld said that more students were learning to swim this year as opposed to previous years, correct? Mr. Norris said that was correct.

Councilor Armstrong asked if the grant in the amount of \$15,000 covers staff that oversees this program? Mr. Norris said it covers one staff person. The rest of the individuals are paid out of the Youth Services Bureau general fund.

Councilor Armstrong asked if there was anything involving intervention for suicidal behaviors? Mr. Norris replied they do have one special event where they do a suicidal awareness campaign which is in April. We do infuse in the after school programs, not necessarily about suicidal behaviors, but we do talk about mental health and how to recognize mental health and how to have coping mechanisms not only for themselves but to recognize when another youth is in distress.

Councilor Armstrong asked about peer pressure and bullying in school. Are they talked about as well? Mr. Norris said yes, they have programs on social learning which focus on fostering positive behaviors, emotional regulation and healthy relationships.

Councilor Armstrong asked if there were any tutoring programs? Mr. Norris said they don't have any specific tutoring programs, but they do have an after school program that is called RISE and its for elementary and middle school children. Any of the kids that need help with their homework or they just need help reading, there is staff there that help them process that.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

### 13) RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS



MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase seconded by Councilor Naeem to accept the resignation of Michael Champlin from the Board of Ethics.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

**14) MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS**

a) Minutes of the October 7, 2024 Regular Town Council Meeting

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Klase, seconded by Councilor Gluck Hoffman to approve the minutes of the October 7, 2024 Regular Town Council Meeting as presented.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

**15) PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS - None**

**16) EXECUTIVE SESSION - None**

**17) ADJOURNMENT**

MOVED by Councilor Armstrong, seconded by Deputy Mayor Klase to adjourn the meeting at 9:18 p.m.

Motion Passed 9-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Helene M. Albert  
Recording Secretary