



**TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
SPECIAL MEETING
AUGUST 24, 2020
VIRTUAL MEETING
APPROVED MINUTES**

1) CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Trinks called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Mayor Donald Trinks, Deputy Mayor Joe McAuliffe, Councilor Nuchette Black-Burke, Councilor Lisa Rampulla Bress, Councilor James Dobler, and Councilor Donald Jepsen

Absent: Councilors James Govoni, Lenworth Walker and Kenneth Wilkos

2) PUBLIC COMMENT

Ed Dembowski, 38 Stacy Drive, spoke in favor of removing the John Mason statue and relocating it to the Historical Society so it may be viewed in the proper historical context. Mr. Dembowski stated that honoring Columbus for discovering America doesn't make sense, since Columbus never even set foot upon it. Mr. Dembowski is asking the Council to change the day's name.

Rosie Miskavitch, 20 Coach Circle, a former Board of Education President, spoke of the fate of the John Mason statue. Ms. Miskavitch said that this item warrants discussion and consideration from all points of view. Ms. Miskavitch stated that no one can attend this meeting in person, since there is only virtual attendance. Making this decision without actual public attendance and involvement is an act of irresponsibility by the Town Council and speaks to a political agenda rather than a decision that speaks for the town's citizens. Ms. Miskavitch respectfully requests any action be postponed until full in person participation is allowed.

Andrea Walden, 38 Stacy Drive, spoke in favor of moving the John Mason statue to the Historical Society with updated and accurate context being added to the display. This way, the town can learn the history of John Mason and the atrocities he committed.

Sally Grossman, 106 Niles Road, spoke in favor of the removal of the John Mason statue and the renaming of Columbus Day. Ms. Grossman expressed her concern for the abrupt ending to the last Town Council meeting which was extremely disappointing, considering the votes to extend meetings had always been approved in the past. Ms. Grossman stated that it seems to be a deliberate attempt from the Republicans to avoid a vote on this matter, despite significant community interest. The most troubling thing for Ms. Grossman were comments made by Councilor Wilkos, where he stated he was willing to overlook comments made by almost every person who spoke in favor of removing the John Mason statue. Ms. Grossman feels that these comments are the opposite of what an elected official is supposed to do. Ms. Grossman said that perhaps Councilor Wilkos does not want to do his job and should resign. It is a choice and a privilege to serve the community. Ms. Grossman stated that there is almost 1,000 people who have signed a petition to relocate the John Mason statue to the Historical Society. Also, the



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Windsor Public school system needs an answer about renaming Columbus Day as soon as possible. Ms. Grossman feels that this should be voted on tonight and then move on to more pressing issues.

Donna Grossman, 781 Kennedy Road, stated that Christopher Columbus did not discover America. One of his first acts in the hemisphere was to take six indigenous persons as slaves. Ms. Grossman feels that it is well past time to be honoring a day in Columbus' name. Ms. Grossman expressed that it is time to address racism now and not wait.

Lauren Shea-Warren, 51 Taylor Street, thanked the Town Council for having this special meeting tonight to discuss these important topics. Ms. Shea-Warren is in favor of relocating the John Mason statue to the Windsor Historical Society and the renaming of Columbus Day. Ms. Shea-Warren expressed her concern for the way this proposal has been handled by several of the elected officials. It saddens her to think that the topic of relocating a statue of a murderer has turned into a game of politics. Ms. Shea-Warren said that she implores those elected officials who have refused to attend tonight without good cause to reconsider what their oath truly means for this town.

Susan Miller, 10 Ethan Drive, spoke in favor of relocating the John Mason statue and renaming Columbus Day. Ms. Miller said that we see things that need change and we find ways to change them to make life better. Ms. Miller feels that we should start seriously focusing on the climate crisis lens more. Ms. Miller hopes that the Town can make continuous change for the better.

George Slate, 74 Ethan Drive, spoke of Mayor Trinks and how he indicated that the Pequot Tribe would be offering a written statement. Mr. Slate feels that the statement is the only thing that really matters. Mr. Slate stated that Thanksgiving Day applies to Columbus and might need renaming. He said that the Windsor High School Warrior mascot needs to be renamed. Mr. Slate said don't stop at the black and the brown people, you are forgetting the red and yellow people. He doesn't know why there is such a rush with the easement and a rush to judgment.

Jennifer Beaudoin, 537 Park Avenue, spoke of the Pequot nation making their feelings clear and it's time to move the John Mason statue to the Historical Society.

John Dunn, 15 Strawberry Hill, spoke in favor of leaving the John Mason statue where it is now located and adding additional descriptive plaques to explain John Mason's history. He feels the best way to bring this to a conclusion is to put it on the November voting ballot and let the town vote on it.

Dr. Jody Terranova, 52 Cobblestone Way, former Deputy Mayor of the Town Council, commended the Council for starting these conversations on race, diversity, equity, and inclusion. Dr. Terranova thanked Councilor Black-Burke for leading the charge and wanted to let her know that there are many people supporting her. Dr. Terranova expressed her concern about the last Council meeting, although it was wonderful to see so many residents participating in local government, she was disappointed that residents had to wait for hours to speak and then



were never given the time to participate. She felt the perception of some members of the Council were either unwilling, uninterested, or uncomfortable having these difficult conversations on race and inequality. Dr. Terranova said that perception is persisting tonight with three Councilors not participating in this meeting. Every single Council member voted in favor of the resolution declaring racism as a public health crisis, which means not just voting, signing a piece of paper, or patting yourself on the back, but doing real work to make a real change. Dr. Terranova explained that the John Mason statue is a symbol of something that is hurtful and cruel to some people. She expressed that the statue is a symbol and to grow as a town, we need to correct some mistakes of the past. The Council needs to be willing to hear the uncomfortable things, show some empathy and make some steps to change. Moving the statue would not be a rush, but an easy first step to show that we meant what we said when we declared racism as a public health crisis.

Gary Woodruff, 72 Toby Avenue, spoke in favor of relocating the John Mason statue to the Historical Society and the creation of Indigenous People's day as a holiday.

Hilary Carpenter, 45 Bradford Drive, spoke about the remarkable job the Town has done to keep business going through the pandemic. She stated that the Town has done a great job allowing citizens to be heard. Ms. Carpenter is favor of relocating the statue off the green and if she had her way, the statue would be moved from the Town of Windsor. The Green is a place of honor, not a place where a statue of a murderer should be put on a pedestal.

Liz Dupont-Diehl, 78 Palisado Avenue, spoke in favor of relocating the John Mason statue and renaming Columbus Day. Personally she feels the statue should be moved out of town, but moving it to the Historical Society and allowing the full story to be told would be fine.

Bill Arnold, 336 Palisado Avenue, spoke in favor of relocating the John Mason statue to the Historical Society and establishing Indigenous People's Day.

Becky Jacobsen, 50 Lighthouse Road, spoke in favor of changing Columbus Day to Indigenous People's day since Columbus never set foot in North America. She doesn't feel like it's against Italian Americans. Ms. Jacobsen is in favor of relocating the John Mason statue to the Windsor Historical Society in order to give it the correct context and right place. She indicated that if we as a town are going to recognize racism as a public health crisis, then it's time to actually do something about it.

Cecilia Caride, 43 Poquonock Avenue, spoke in favor of the Windsor Historical Society giving the statue more context and a more inclusive display. Ms. Caride said that she understands why John Mason was a great founder of Windsor, but the other side of the story hasn't been told. She feels the town is telling the Pequot Tribe that they can't tell their story.



Joe Waterhouse, 9 Water Street, said he agreed with John Dunn's comments, but the Town of Windsor should donate the plot of land the statue sits on to the Windsor Historical Society. Then the statue would be on their property and not have to be removed.

Cari Turek, 248 Poquonock Avenue, spoke of the John Mason statue being moved to the Windsor in 1996 to no longer glorify Major Mason for his role in the Pequot War, but rather to acknowledge his many other contributions to the Town and State. Ms. Turek stated that the original plaque was removed from the statue's granite base at the request of the Pequots and a new plaque was created. The state failed to follow through on the recommendation to create three additional plaques to provide more information on John Mason's legacy. Ms. Turek said that this is not white washing history as seeking its removal claimed, however the group for the removal of the statue failed to provide any history in their petition. Ms. Turek stated that the residents only know a fraction of the complex history of what John Mason as a public servant did. Ms. Turek feels that from the July 6th meeting, some members of the Democratic side have displayed a lot of transparency in this process and aligned themselves with a group of extremist in their party. She indicated that according to the Windsor Journal article, the historical integrity of the statue will be compromised if moved to the Historical Society as their plan is to remove the two granite pieces that it sits on. She feels the statue will be unsafe if out of public view for vandalism. Ms. Turek stated that she is submitting a total of 942 petitioned signatures requesting the John Mason statue remain on the Palisado Green. She stated that for the record she was not allowed to post her electronic petition on the Windsor Bulletin Board as the administrator is a member of the Democratic town committee and only allowed the opposing group's petition to be posted there. Ms. Turek is not in favor of changing the name of Columbus Day, but rather to just pick another day for Indigenous People's Day.

Kathleen Tracy, 4 On the Green, spoke in favor of the removal of the John Mason statue and support of renaming Columbus Day. Ms. Tracy said that we need to create a new history of a culture of peace.

Ned Bacigalupo, 89 Farmstead Lane, spoke of the July 4th vandalism of the statue with red paint. Mr. Bacigalupo stated that Major John Mason was asked by the Mohegans and other tribes to establish the trading post in Windsor in 1633. Mr. Bacigalupo gave a history of John Mason and the tribes. He feels this issue should be put on the next budget meeting in May so the town may know the exact cost to relocate the statue.

Grant Kiehne, 603 Bricklayer Road, thanked the Town Council for letting everyone speak on these issues. Mr. Kiehne feels the town needs to take a step back at some point and figure out how to address these types of issues. He said that these types of issues will never end. There is a never ending list of potential candidates. Mr. Kiehne said that John F. Kennedy was not a perfect person and eventually we may come to the point where we need to change the name of one of our grade schools. Mr. Kiehne expressed that there are many pressing priorities that need addressing in the town. We are in the middle of a national health crisis and have an economic crisis where small businesses are failing.



Gregory Stiles, 132 Capen Street, spoke of his recommendation of taking the historic Palisado Green, closing off the roadway on the south side, extending the entire green to the Historical Society property and incorporating more exhibits. Mr. Stiles feels that this will enhance the education for this museum.

Tim Curtis, 20 Kendrick Lane, spoke in favor of the relocation of the statue. Mr. Curtis stated that moving the statue doesn't erase the history of John Mason. Mr. Curtis feels that Columbus Day should be changed to Indigenous People's Day since the tribes were here first.

Lakisha Hyatt, 104 Benjamin Court, spoke in favor of the John Mason statue being moved. Ms. Hyatt stated that the idea is that the statue that reflects what is important to some in history, is going to move to a historical location to give it its full historical context. Ms. Hyatt doesn't understand the magnitude of the rage between residents and groups. Since Windsor declared racism a public health emergency, we should act now and make an action to remove something from limited description to receiving its full context in history. Ms. Hyatt asked the Council is this how we disagree? She feels the Town needs to learn how to disagree so she can have confidence in the Town Council.

David Furie, 37 Lighthouse Hill Rd., spoke in favor of moving of the statue to the Historical Society. He is also in favor of Indigenous Peoples Day. The Board of Education will take cue from what the Council does on this situation. Both of these issues go into actions in connection with the declaration in the unanimous decision of the Town Council declaring racism as a public health crisis.

Alan Simon, North Hampton, MA, a former Deputy Mayor, spoke in favor of moving the statue. Mr. Simon feels the public discourse that has developed with the attacks and name calling is uncalled for. He congratulated the Council for having a special meeting, but it's a meeting that should have never been needed. Mr. Simon hoped that there will be a free vote in the end. He feels the little parliamentary tactics to shut down a debate are beyond the way a small Town Council should be operating. Mr. Simon stated that Councilors who can't show up for a legal meeting should really reconsider if they should be on the Town Council.

Katherine Ellis, 97 Poquonock Avenue, spoke in favor of moving the statue to the Windsor Historical Society so it is meant to teach history in its whole context. Ms. Ellis supports the move to declare the second Monday in October as Indigenous People's Day. Ms. Ellis believes that if our Town wants to truly recognize racism as a public health crisis, that actions need to actually happen to reflect that.

Marcus Mason Marron, Old Lyme, spoke that this issue is not about numbers, it's about principles and perception. When the John Mason statue was relocated to Windsor, it was rebirthed to represent his entire career as a public servant and founder of Windsor. Windsor just declared racism as a public health crisis and intends to develop a plan of action. Mr. Marron feels that the first step needs to be the John Mason statue. He feels the only fair thing would be



to leave the historic statue right where it is and add interpretive materials to provide a full understanding. Mr. Marron has a question for Mitchell Rey, the Eastern Tribal Council member and Councilor Black-Burke. He would like them to explain why they approve of the statue moving to the Historical Society and cannot accept it where it is. It makes no sense to incur the expense and hassles to move it across the street and hide it. History matters, whether you agree with it or not.

Marissa Greene, 1233 Matianuck Avenue, spoke in favor of moving the statue. Ms. Greene said that the Palisado Green is a place for reverence and the statue doesn't convey that. She feels the Historical Society will be better suited to explain the history of John Mason's past. Ms. Greene stated that we value all people and all lives, not just the victors in history.

Paul Panos, 48 Brookview Road, disagreed with changing the name of Columbus Day and moving the John Mason statue. Mr. Panos gave a brief overview of John Mason's history.

Charles Windsor Jackson III, 26 Wilson Avenue, spoke of being neither for nor against the removal of the statue. He feels it makes no fiscal sense to move this statue 150 feet. He said that if you add an informative plaque to it, it would be better.

Kim Reed, 35 Last Leaf Circle, spoke in favor of moving the statue. Ms. Reed agreed with Dr. Terranova's comments. She is also in favor of changing Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day.

Coralee Jones, 1171 Matianuck Avenue, declared the issues of removing the statue and changing Columbus Day is an issue of concern for people who are against these proposals. She stated that especially seniors are afraid to sign petitions for fear of retaliation. A great divide has been created in our Town over a statue. There are more important things to focus on right now than a statue. Ms. Jones feels that if the statue should be removed, the people who want it moved should raise the money to do so. The State doesn't have the money for this and the town has other important issues to spend its money on. She doesn't understand how this statue has become a symbol of racism since John Mason fought with other tribes against the Pequot War. Ms. Jones said that new plaques should be installed that describe the complete story of John Mason. This has gotten ridiculous and let's concentrate on the survival of people today.

Mayor Trinks said that it is not his intention to vote this evening. Mayor Trinks stated that he would like to have the whole Council present to hear all their comments and then vote. He knows that it may come as a disappointment to the audience, but September 8th is not that far away. The Special meeting was supposed to happen earlier than tonight, but the tropical storm made that impossible. Mayor Trinks thanked everyone that spoke publicly tonight.

3) CONSIDERATION OF A REQUEST TO THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT TO REMOVE THE JOHN MASON STATUE FROM THE PALISADO GREEN



Mayor Trinks stated town staff has had discussions with the State of Connecticut relative to the possibility of the statue being moved. The state indicated that they would consider a request to relocate the statue if the Town Council voted as such.

The Windsor Historical Society has communicated their willingness to consider hosting the statue if the Town Council and State determine to relocate it. They also stated a strong interest in ensuring that any future interpretation of the statue be as inclusive as possible and that it provide a full and balanced understanding of both past and modern history surrounding the role of John Mason and the statue.

Councilor Dobler wanted to thank everyone for their opinions tonight. He feels that over the past few months there has been a lot of misinformation on both sides. Councilor Dobler feels that the Tribal Nation's opinion should be the last say. The Tribal Nation has said that they would like to have the statue removed. Councilor Dobler explained that he liked the idea of the Historical Society procuring the statue. He personally knows four direct descendants of John Mason and he has asked them and they said they could care less where the statue is located. Councilor Dobler stated that he has had a difference of opinion with many of the other Councilors on both sides, yet he is always open to communicate with them. He feels we have lost that as a town and hopefully after September, we can move on as a town.

Councilor Black-Burke thanked everyone who took the time this evening to share their comments. It's very important to do so and no one should ever be afraid to share their views or ideas. Councilor Black-Burke said that as a country, we evolve and as we evolve, we have to be willing to understand that others see things from a different vantage point. Councilor Black-Burke feels that as a Town Council member, if a citizen comes forward and shares a concern with her, it is her responsibility to address it. This is not about political agenda and whether it be just a statue, it still has to be addressed. Councilor Black-Burke said that the people we need to hear from regarding the statue are the descendants of Major Mason, as well as the Tribal Nation. The statement from the Tribal Nation was very clear that they are in favor of removing the John Mason statue from public space permanently. Additionally, she encouraged Governor Lamont and the assembly to consider a committee that looks at representation of tribes in Connecticut, where there can review the state statutes and culturally appropriate alternatives. Councilor Black-Burke said that it is disheartening to hear the abuse of anyone no matter which side they are on. She feels we need to pride ourselves as a town. She explained that yes we are diverse, but what about the inclusion part. Everyone needs to feel included. Councilor Black-Burke wanted to ensure that when everyone speaks, they speak from a place of facts, and speak with the understanding that everyone is entitled to their opinion.

Councilor Rampulla Bress agreed with everything Councilor Black-Burke just said. She is saddened by the hurtful comments and hopes in the future the conversation will remain civil and not personal. Councilor Rampulla Bress wanted to ensure the community that the Town Council is still conducting business on a regular basis and people can communicate with all of the Councilors, whether by phone, email, or letter, even though we are doing our meeting virtually right now. Councilor Rampulla Bress stated that as an educator and an artist, the John Mason



statue is valuable to her for the lessons that can be learned from it. She feels moving the statue to the Historical Society will adequately represent it and explain it regarding the greatness and the horrific acts that transpired.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe thanked everyone for coming out and voicing their opinions tonight. It's a very important part of our democratic process and he appreciates it. In regards to adding this item to the November ballot, Deputy Mayor McAuliffe doesn't think that would be possible. He will check into that before the next meeting. Deputy Mayor McAuliffe is saddened by some the comments and people need to be more empathetic to all other citizens of the town.

Councilor Jepsen stated that he would like to publicly apologize to Mayor Trinks for something that happened at the last meeting. Councilor Jepsen said that he felt that former Councilor Jenkins' second opportunity to speak was a violation of the rules and at that time the Mayor implied and Councilor Jepsen inferred that he had allowed it by mistake. He later learned from the Assistant Town Manager that the Mayor does not have the ability to monitor the public comments. The public microphones came on without the monitor turning them on and the staff is now investigating how that happened. Councilor Jepsen apologized to the Mayor. Mayor Trinks accepted Councilor Jepsen's apology.

Councilor Jepsen stated that given the way these issues have evolved, he wished to offer a much needed perspective. The Hartford Courant reported that the Mayor said the statue was going to be removed and this happened before the discussion was started. Councilor Jepsen said that the Mayor explained at the August meeting what had happened. Councilor Jepsen felt that at the August meeting, as very Democratic Councilors spoke, there was important information that the Republican Councilors did not share with them. Councilor Jepsen stated that Councilor Dobler said that the Pequot Nation submitted a letter and the State of Connecticut had been contacted, both of which they were not aware of. He felt that the Republicans were being shut out of the process and disrespected for the second time. When the motion came to extend the meeting past eleven o'clock, ending the meeting felt appropriate and necessary. Then came condemnation. The Windsor Democratic Town Committee condemned Councilor Jepsen and his republican counterparts for their actions. He felt that not only was he disrespected, but condemned also. The Democratic Town Chairman Adam Gutcheon accused the Republicans of bringing Trump style politics to Windsor.

Councilor Jepsen gave a brief summary of a Board of Education meeting five years ago which was approaching the eleventh hour for the Board of Education budget. The Republicans made a motion to extend the meeting, but was voted down by the Democrats. There were upset with Republicans in that meeting, but no one was condemned after. Councilor Jepsen feels these issues are causing a bigger wedge between the two parties. He stated that personally he does not favor the removal or continuing of the statue, as long as the town is not responsible to pay to move it since the town does not own it. Councilor Jepsen asked the Town Council for a formal inquiry to the State of Connecticut with a written response stating their stand on the statue and research on any conveyance or any other legal issue regarding the statue. Twenty-five years ago, when the state



was looking to place the statue somewhere it was looking for it to be on public land. Councilor Jepsen would like the town staff to investigate these two items and get back to the Town Council.

Councilor Black-Burke thanked Councilor Jepsen for his comments and she truly respects the public apology. Councilor Black-Burke stated that at the August 3rd meeting, that as a caucus we were put upon by a statement from the other side of the table eluding to a fact that we were not in the Council Chambers. She was hoping tonight that something was said to that affect, but some piece was missing. Councilor Black-Burke said that just like Councilor Rampulla Bress stated, we are all still doing good work even though we are all not in the chambers. Councilor Black-Burke felt like she was attacked since a comment like that can be made and it minimizes the hard work that all the Councilors have done.

Councilor Jepsen said that he appreciated Councilor Black-Burke's remarks and it was never their intention to say people were not doing their job. Councilor Jepsen stated that Councilors do more than just meet for meetings. After meetings we have a get together and talk together where we further develop bonds. Over the years, this has forged working relationships that are very important to the smooth operation of the Council. He feels that is missing now and has helped to create division where there should not be. Councilor Jepsen stated that the Council functions better if we are together more than on a Zoom meeting.

Councilor Black-Burke thanked Councilor Jepsen again and appreciated his response. She stated that the phones still work and emails are always answered.

Councilor Rampulla Bress stated that she appreciated the apology to Mayor Trinks and feels it was well deserved. She appreciated Councilor Jepsen's responses and know that he missed the rest of the Council. Councilor Rampulla Bress stated that facts are important and when Councilors share their facts, the public believes what they are saying. The town staff and Town Manager have been working tirelessly and diligently to complete tasks for business, whether the Council is in the building or not. She wanted the public to understand the facts that the Council and town's performance is in no way diminished while COVID has overtaken us. Please pick up the phone, call us, and email us, because we want to hear from you.

Mayor Trinks stated that his comments were not to make it look like the Council is going in any certain direction. He was merely trying to put a compromise together. Mayor Trinks thanked the Historical Society, who voted to accept the statue. Mayor Trinks stated that Councilor Jepsen is correct and we should make sure there is no conveyance that might prevent the Historical Society from having it. He is concerned at the expense of moving the statue and doesn't foresee the town paying for moving it since the statue is not the towns. The scare tactics that are being used need to stop. Mayor Trinks is in favor of the Historical Society giving the statue a more educational value. He thanked Deputy Mayor McAuliffe for the research he is going to do. Mayor Trinks assured everyone that not one single group is guiding the Council in their decision. The discussion needs to be civil and it needs to be proper because that is the only way it is going to get done. Mayor Trinks hoped that all the information will be obtained and a decision to be made



on September 8th, so we can move on to more pressing issues. Mayor Trinks stated that Councilor Jepsen's two questions will be researched and hopes to get a response from the State.

Councilor Rampulla Bress stated that Councilor Jepsen brought up the *Windsor Journal* and she saw something that disturbed her from the Republican chair. She found it very objectionable for someone to mention the agenda items were not very important since they didn't involve money.

Councilor Rampulla Bress explained that her job as a Councilor is not only about money and feels that kind of comment was very disrespectful and diminished the importance of the items that were on the agenda.

4) CONSIDERATION OF RECOGNIZING THE SECOND MONDAY OF EACH OCTOBER AS INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY

Councilor Black-Burke stated that this change is to promote tolerance, atonement and understanding as it relates to indigenous people. In Windsor this is an effort to be inclusive for all. The definition of the word inclusion is about respecting, appreciating, and welcoming others to feel and be a part of something. Councilor Black-Burke agreed with Mayor Trinks that the entire Council should vote on this together. She said that in Windsor we are diverse, but in regards to inclusivity we are still working on it.

Councilor Dobler said that the Town does not recognize Columbus Day as a holiday.

Councilor Jepsen stated that he agreed with Councilor Dobler. Most don't realize that the Town is open on Columbus Day. The Board of Education is closed that day. Councilor Jepsen is not in favor of creating a holiday, but rather is in favor of recognizing Indigenous Peoples Day.

Councilor Rampulla Bress thanked Councilors Jepsen and Dobler for explaining the facts about Columbus Day. Indigenous Peoples Day will honor the past, the present, and the future of native peoples throughout the United States. It recognizes the legacy, the impact of colonialism of native communities, and celebrates the culture, contributions, and resilience of contemporary native peoples. Councilor Rampulla Bress believed that as an educator, we need to hear more about cultures that are not represented. She would love to support our Town with a proclamation to rename the day.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe agreed with Councilor Rampulla Bress and fully supports renaming the day to make people more aware of native peoples.

5) DISCUSSION OF RACISM AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Town Manager Souza stated while a broader, multi-faceted framework for a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy Plan is being developed, town staff has initiated several efforts to begin addressing objectives within the resolution. Below is a recap of some of the activities to date.



For example, the police department has outlined a four point approach which includes:

- employee training
- community outreach and engagement
- policy and data information sharing
- implementing body worn camera system

Action items will include offering ongoing training sessions related to topics such as cultural diversity, implicit bias and de-escalation; conducting several community outreach and listening sessions during the month of August; offering citizen police academies; and posting key department policies as well as annual reports on use of force and calls for service data.

Human Resources is in the process of developing additional training resources to build upon implicit bias training offered to full-time employees in the past two years.

The Health Department and Town Manager's Office staff have continued to research a variety of sources that may be able to provide an array of data sets to help guide and measure future action steps.

Councilor Black-Burke quoted James Baldwin by saying, "Not everything that is faced can be changed but nothing can be changed until it is faced." On June 15th when the Council passed the resolution, she believed nine individuals intended to work toward ensuring that there are concrete next steps. Councilor Black-Burke said that this is not going to happen overnight and it takes time to dismantle. Here in town we have folks who are from Indigenous decent and from listening to the conversations over the last month, they are probably not wanting to share with anyone that they are from Indigenous decent. Racism is a public health issue as it has been shown to create high blood pressure and anxiety in people. Race has become a social construct that has become a system of oppression in this country. The work ahead of us is to ensure that the health issue is addressed through looking at data, the mental health states of those in our community and walking towards ensuring that racism in Windsor is addressed. Racism is real and it will survive. She is a mother of a fourteen year old son who is afraid to go outside and play at the park. You don't know unless you have walked a mile in my shoes. Visit the American Public Health Association to go and read about racism as a public health crisis. Health Equity in Hartford can offer insight on how to become antiracist.

Councilor Rampulla Bress thanked Councilor Black-Burke for her painful personal comments of racism to educate the community. She thanked Town Manager Souza and the town staff in their willingness to approach this situation. Councilor Rampulla Bress thanked Councilor Black-Burke for taking the lead and sending the Council on this journey. Education is still needed to learn about each other's experiences.

Deputy Mayor McAuliffe stated that we are all in this together, not just the black and brown people, but all of us work towards solving this together.



Councilor Jepsen said that with all the data collection, it has reminded him of years ago of the equity study that was taken at the Board of Education. Maybe we can ask the Board of Education to roll out something similar to help collect new data as we go down this path.

Town Manager Souza said that he has had a preliminary conversation with the Superintendent to see what kind of data they have. Town Manager Souza stated that they did not talk specifically about data collection.

Councilor Jepsen said that this might be something we could look into as we go down this path.

Councilor Black-Burke said that she agreed with Councilor Jepsen and the study could be a great baseline.

Mayor Trinks said that he appreciated the work the Town Manager is doing for the town. This item will be a continuous item on our agenda that we keep coming back to and discussing.

6) RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

MOVED by Councilor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to accept the resignation of Brian Canoni from the Conservation Commission.

Motion Passed 6-0-0 (Councilors Govoni, Walker and Wilkos absent)

MOVED by Councilor Rampulla Bress, seconded by Councilor Black-Burke to:

- REAPPOINT Patricia Bruhn as a Democratic member to the Hartford Area Cable Television Advisory Council for a two year term to expire June 30, 2022 or until a successor is appointed
- REAPPOINT Paul St. Amand as a Republican member to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission for a four year term to expire March 31, 2024 or until a successor is appointed
- REAPPOINT Bruce McCormick as a Democratic member to the Youth Commission for a three year term to expire September 30, 2021 or until a successor is appointed
- REAPPOINT Max Kuziak as a Democratic member to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a four year term to expire November 10, 2023 or until a successor is appointed
- APPOINT Charles Button as a Democratic member to the Lower Farmington River & Salmon Brook Wild & Scenic Committee for a two year term to expire August 3, 2022 or until a successor is appointed
- APPOINT Jennifer Filer as an Unaffiliated Alternate member to the Lower Farmington River & Salmon Brook Wild & Scenic Committee for a two year term to expire August 3, 2022 or until a successor is appointed



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- APPOINT Neil Chaudhary as a Democratic member to the Citizen Advisory Task Force on Clean and Sustainable Energy for a one year term to expire August 3, 2021 or until a successor is appointed
- APPOINT Jeffrey Dyreson as a Democratic member to the Citizen Advisory Task Force on Clean and Sustainable Energy for a one year term to expire August 3, 2021 or until a successor is appointed
- APPOINT Barbara Peyton as a Republican member to the Citizen Advisory Task Force on Clean and Sustainable Energy for a one year term to expire August 3, 2021 or until a successor is appointed
- APPOINT George Slate as a Republican member to the Citizen Advisory Task Force on Clean and Sustainable Energy for a one year term to expire August 3, 2021 or until a successor is appointed
- APPOINT Pamela Stratton as a Republican member to the Citizen Advisory Task Force on Clean and Sustainable Energy for a one year term to expire August 3, 2021 or until a successor is appointed
- APPOINT Eric Weiner as a Democratic member to the Citizen Advisory Task Force on Clean and Sustainable Energy for a one year term to expire August 3, 2021 or until a successor is appointed
- APPOINT Elizabeth Yetman as a Democratic member to the Citizen Advisory Task Force on Clean and Sustainable Energy for a one year term to expire August 3, 2021 or until a successor is appointed

Motion Passed 6-0-0 (Councilors Govoni, Walker and Wilkos absent)

Councilor Rampulla Bress thanked the committee members and citizens who waited patiently for these appointments. She looks so forward to their serving our town.

7) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilor Jepsen stated that traditionally we approve minutes at a regular meeting not a special meeting. Would it better to hold off for the whole Council to be together?

Mayor Trinks said that he had no problem with that.

- a) Minutes of the July 6, 2020 Special Town Council meeting

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Councilor Rampulla Bress to table the minutes of the July 6, 2020 Special Town Council meeting to September 8, 2020.

Motion Passed 6-0-0 (Councilors Govoni, Walker and Wilkos absent)

- b) Minutes of the July 6, 2020 Regular Town Council meeting



Town Council Special meeting

August 24, 2020

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Councilor Rampulla Bress to table the minutes of the July 6, 2020 Regular Town Council meeting to September 8, 2020.

Motion Passed 6-0-0 (Councilors Govoni, Walker and Wilkos absent)

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to enter into Executive Session at 9:48 p.m. for the purpose of strategy and negotiations in respect to collective bargaining (Teamsters)

Motion Passed 6-0-0 (Councilors Govoni, Walker and Wilkos absent)

8) EXECUTIVE SESSION

Present: Mayor Donald Trinks, Deputy Mayor Joe McAuliffe, Councilor Nuchette Black-Burke, Councilor Lisa Rampulla Bress, Councilor James Dobler, and Councilor Donald Jepsen,

Staff: Peter Souza, Town Manager; Scott Colby, Assistant Town Manager

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe, to re-enter the Special Town Council meeting session at 10:12 p.m.

Motion Passed 6-0-0 (Councilors Govoni, Walker and Wilkos absent)

9) ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councilor Jepsen, seconded by Deputy Mayor McAuliffe to adjourn the meeting at 10:13 p.m.

Motion Passed 6-0-0 (Councilors Govoni, Walker and Wilkos absent)

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Ozaki
Recording Secretary