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TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT  
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

**HELD REMOTELY  
at GoToMeeting.com**

TUESDAY  
JUNE 23, 2020  
6:30 P.M.

**RECORD OF VOTES & MINUTES**

The Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, June 23, 2020 was called to order at 6:31 p.m. There was a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance was said. Councilors in attendance were Craig C. Fishbein, Thomas Laffin, Joseph A. Marrone, III, Gina Morgenstein, Christopher K. Shortell, Christina Tatta, Vincent F. Testa (arrived at 7:15 p.m.), Jason Zandri and Chairman Vincent Cervoni. Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr., Town Attorney Gerald E. Farrell, Sr. and Comptroller James Bowes were also present (**BY TELECONFERENCE**).

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Consent Agenda
  - 3a. Consider and approve Tax Refunds totaling \$11,637.42 (#942-968)  
Acct. #1001001- 41020 - Tax Collector
  - 3b. Consider and approve Merit Review (1) – Human Resources
  - 3c. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$3,100 – Fire Dept.:  
  
\$3,100 From: Regular General Wages    Acct. #: 10020150-51000  
  
\$2,000 To: Overtime                            Acct.#10020150-51400  
\$1,000 To: Wage Differential                Acct.#10020150-51450  
\$ 100 To: Other Pay                            Acct.#10020150-51900
  - 3d. Acceptance of Donation from Double Play Cafe' and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$200 to Revenue Donations – Police, Acct. #2502002-47152 and to Expense Donations-Police, Acct. #25020050-58830-10135 – Police Dept.
  - 3e. Consider and approve Farmland Lease Bid Waiver for continuation of lease for property known as 995C East Center Street, Field #18A for another five year term – Conservation Commission
  - 3f. Set a Public Hearing for 6:30 p.m. on July 14, 2020 for the 2020 Neighborhood Assistance Program – Mayor

- 3g. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$11,100 from Employee Pension and Benefits, Acct. #926 to Meter Expense, Acct. #586 – Electric Div.
- 3h. Approval of Town Council Minutes of May 26, 2020, June 2, 2020 and June 9, 2020.

**MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS 3a.-3h.**

**MADE BY: LAFFIN**  
**SECONDED BY: FISHBEIN**  
**VOTE: ALL AYE**  
**MOTION: PASSED**

4. **Items Removed from the Consent Agenda:** *None*

5. **PUBLIC QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD**

Opened Public Question and Answer Period at 6:36 p.m.

Ben Martin, Ward Street, stated we are seeing people standing all over this country for unity and he feels Councilor Fishbein should resign.

Chairman Cervoni muted him and told him he was out of order per the Council rules. He went on to say we do not allow personal criticism or engagement on a personal level.

Mr. Martin in turn changes his comment to say anyone representing Wallingford who is a racist should resign.

Closed Public Question and Answer Period at 6:39 p.m.

- 6. (b) Executive Session Pursuant to Section 1-210(b)(4) with regard to settlement of matter In litigation - PUC

**MOTION WAS MADE TO MOVE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 6:45 P.M.**

**MADE BY: LAFFIN**  
**SECONDED BY: SHORTELL**

<b>ROLL CALL VOTE:</b>	<b>SHORTELL: YES</b>
<b>FISHBEIN: YES</b>	<b>TATTA: YES</b>
<b>LAFFIN: YES</b>	<b>TESTA: YES</b>
<b>MARRONE: YES</b>	<b>ZANDRI: YES</b>
<b>MORGENSTEIN: YES</b>	<b>CERVONI: YES</b>
<b>9-AYE</b>	
<b>MOTION: PASSED</b>	

**MOTION WAS MADE TO MOVE OUT OF EXECUTIV SESSION AT 7:30 P.M.**

**MADE BY: LAFFIN**  
**SECONDED BY: FISHBEIN**  
**VOTE: ALL AYE**  
**MOTION: PASSED**

**Time of Executive Session 6:45 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.**

**Attendance at Executive Session:**

<b>FISHBEIN</b>	<b>MAYOR WILLIAM W. DICKINSON, JR.</b>
<b>LAFFIN</b>	<b>TOWN ATTORNEY GERALD E. FARRELL, SR.</b>
<b>MARRONE</b>	<b>RICHARD HENDERSHOT, DIRECTOR OF PUC</b>
<b>MORGENSTEIN</b>	<b>ATTORNEY JOHN COYLE (PUC)</b>
<b>SHORTELL</b>	
<b>TATTA</b>	
<b>TESTA</b>	
<b>ZANDRI</b>	
<b>CERVONI</b>	

- (a) Action with regard to approval of settlement agreement regarding FERC Docket EL 16-19-000 - PUC

*In Attendance: Attorney John Coyle, Public Utilities*  
*Richard Hendershot, Director of Public Utilities*

Mr. Hendershot indicated the proposed settlement for the FERC transmission costs are not over compensating other users.

Attorney Coyle stated that the other six systems have signed off and he feels we should as well.

**MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT  
REGARDING FERC AS DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION.**

**MADE BY: LAFFIN**  
**SECONDED BY: FISHBEIN**

Mr. Martin asked if this is because the transmission system was sold. Mr. Hendershot answered no and stated it had nothing to do with that.

<b>ROLL CALL VOTE:</b>	<b>SHORTELL: YES</b>
<b>FISHBEIN: YES</b>	<b>TATTA: YES</b>
<b>LAFFIN: YES</b>	<b>TESTA: YES</b>
<b>MARRONE: YES</b>	<b>ZANDRI: YES</b>
<b>MORGENSTEIN: YES</b>	<b>CERVONI: YES</b>
<b>9-AYE</b>	
<b>MOTION: PASSED</b>	

7. Police Chief Wright to answer questions regarding Police Department policies – Councilor Morgenstein.

*In Attendance: Police Chief William Wright*

Chief Wright made an opening statement that the Police Department needs to sustain their budget and services for the good of the town.

Councilor Morgenstein stated this is perfect timing as we put our budget in place and as tensions in the nation rise and the question of racial justice comes up. She remarked that there is this idea not to defund the police but to put social services into the Police Dept. She then said to Chief Wright that she has the utmost respect for him and the department for what they do.

Chief Wright stated we are a sworn contingent of 75 and we are a full service Police Department 24 hours a day. He went on to say we are a tier 3 accredited Department and we have a good relationship with our community.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jacqueline Serna, Clifton Street, asked why we had to have a Meriden Hispanic police officer respond to the murder of the Hispanic teenager.

Chief Wright explained we have many officers who are Latino and many who are tri-lingual and regarding this case, we were assigned an officer in Meriden while pursuing a lead that fell apart but the officer was now attached to our case. Chief Wright indicated we used our own officers to notify the Diaz family of the death and he is very proud of them they did a great job. He said if you look at the census data we are a little short in our Latino representation but when we go out to hire, the Human Resources Department does reach out to all the proper channels to find the candidates but the hiring process in Wallingford is rigorous

Umera Raza, Doris Street, asked if we would consider the Rise Up policies in Wallingford. Chief Wright stated we satisfy all those benchmarks.

Kevin Sigovitch, Prince Street, asked Chief Wright how the public accesses the Police Department's policies. Chief stated they are available you just need to make a records request.

Mr. Martin complimented the police and then asked if the police have accepted any military gear. Chief answered no.

Mr. Martin then asked Chief Wright if he had any officers who do sign language. Chief answered yes.

Mr. Martin asked the Chief if he weeds out candidates who have previous excessive force use. Chief explained the hiring process and noted everyone has to take some exams and then if you move forward a polygraph and then you meet with a psychologist and more rigorous tests. He stated that 99% of people who take these tests never get hired, they weed them out.

Amber Christianson, Sorrento Road, inquired about the life cycle of a complaint. Chief explained it starts with our own review, the complainant is put on notice and then the investigation starts. It could take days or longer it depends on the complaint. Chief stated he reviews it and depending on the nature, he will forward it on to other divisions or it will be resolved/dismissed.

Andrea Serna, Clifton Street, asked if the Police Department has any plans for outreach programs. Chief stated they have a lot of outreach programs but with COVID they are all on hold. He then said we were just about to launch a Citizens Academy.

Rajan Doering, Sharon Drive, thanked Chief Wright for doing this tonight.

Fran Proscino, 14 Jackson Avenue, thanked Chief Wright and asked if there is anything we in town could do better. Chief answered no and stated this is a good community they stand for no nonsense and support us with open arms.

Alexandria Johnson, 487 North Main Street, asked when the car cameras get turned on. Chief stated they are always running. Ms. Johnson then thanked Chief and his department for the great job they do protecting everyone.

Chairman Cervoni thanked Chief Wright.

- 8. Discussion and possible action regarding Mayor’s veto on June 15, 2020-2021 Budget adopted by the Town Council on June 9, 2020 – Chairman Cervoni

**MOTION WAS MADE TO MOVE TO OVERTURN THE MAYOR’S VETO OF THE TOWN COUNCIL’S BUDGET ON JUNE 9<sup>TH</sup> 2020.**

**MADE BY: SHORTELL**

**SECONDED BY: MORGENSTEIN**

Councilor Morgenstein feels we have discussed this enough.

Councilor Laffin said he would love a 0% increase but he still feels it’s not the right way to go about it.

Chairman Cervoni stated he does not anticipate that anything will change tonight but noted in December we voted to hire 16 new firefighters and there are contractual raises in the Budget. He feels this is not a good use of pilot money.

Councilor Marrone stated this is the first year it’s a bi-partisan budget and I’m proud.

<b>ROLL CALL VOTE:</b>		<b>SHORTELL: YES</b>
<b>FISHBEIN: YES</b>		<b>TATTA: YES</b>
<b>LAFFIN: NO</b>		<b>TESTA: YES</b>
<b>MARRONE: YES</b>		<b>ZANDRI: YES</b>
<b>MORGENSTEIN: YES</b>		<b>CERVONI: NO</b>
<b>7-AYE</b>		

**2- NAY**  
**MOTION: PASSED**

9. Discussion and possible action regarding award of the Auditor contract for the next three audits – 2020, 2021 and 2022 fiscal years – Comptroller

**MOTION WAS MADE TO MOVE TO AWARD THE AUDITOR CONTRACT FOR THE NEXT THREE AUDITS – 2020, 2021 and 2022 FISCAL YEARS TO BLUM SHAPIRO.**

**MADE BY: LAFFIN**  
**SECONDED BY: CERVONI**

Chairman Cervoni explained that we went out to bid and got two responses and determined that the Marcum bid did not meet specs. He went on to state that it was a committee of Councilor Laffin, Councilor Zandri and himself who reviewed these with Mr. Bowes.

Councilor Fishbein asked how we notified people that we were going out to bid. Mr. Bowes said we gave out electronic notifications to firms that do this type of work. Councilor Fishbein expressed his concerns about fresh eyes on this and noted it's been a long time with the same firm.

<b>ROLL CALL VOTE:</b>	<b>SHORTELL: YES</b>
<b>FISHBEIN: NO</b>	<b>TATTA: YES</b>
<b>LAFFIN: YES</b>	<b>TESTA: YES</b>
<b>MARRONE: YES</b>	<b>ZANDRI: YES</b>
<b>MORGENSTEIN: ABSTAIN</b>	<b>CERVONI: YES</b>

**7-AYE**  
**1- NAY**  
**1 - ABSTAIN**  
**MOTION: PASSED**

10. Executive Session pursuant to Section 1-200(6)(D) of the Connecticut General Statutes with respect to the purchase, sale and/or leasing of property – Mayor - *Withdrawn*

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Moss  
Council Staff  
Meeting digitally recorded

Vincent Cervoni  
Vincent Cervoni, Chairman

7/5/20  
Date

Barbara Thompson  
Barbara Thompson, Town Clerk

7/5/20  
Date

RECEIVED FOR RECORD 6-29-2020  
AT 4:00 AND RECEIVED BY  
Barbara Thompson TOWN CLERK