

**TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

**TUESDAY
March 8, 2022
6:30 P.M.**

RECORD OF VOTES & MINUTES

The Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, March 8, 2022 was called to order at 6:32 p.m. There was a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance was said. Councilors in attendance were Autumn Allinson, Samuel Carmody, Craig C. Fishbein, Thomas Laffin, Joseph A. Marrone, III, Christina Tatta, Vincent Testa, Jason Zandri and Chairman Vincent Cervoni. Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr., Town Attorney Gerald E. Farrell, Sr., Comptroller Tim Sena were also present.

3. Consent Agenda

- 3a. Consider and approve Tax Refunds totaling \$4,963.59 (#871-#887)
Acct. #1001001- 41020 - Tax Collector
- 3b. Consider and approve two Merit Increases – Human Resources
- 3c. Acceptance of funds from Redflex and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$793 from Court Motor Vehicle Fines, Acct. #1002001-45124 to Police Operating Expense, Acct. #10020050-58735 – Police Dept.
- 3d. Consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$20,000 from Revenue, Acct. #212 to Expenditure-Police Equipment, Acct. #212 TBD – Police Dept.
- 3e. Acceptance of Donations for STEM Academy and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$780 to Revenue, Acct. #2264002-47152 and to Expenditures, Acct. #22640150-58830 – Y&SS
- 3f. Acceptance of Donations for Holiday for Giving and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$19,502 to Revenue, Acct. #2134002-47152 and to Expenditures, Acct. #21340100-58830 – Y&SS
- 3g. Acceptance of Donation from Operation Fuel and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$375 to Revenue, Acct. #2134002-47152 and to Expenditures, Acct. #21340100-58830 – Y&SS
- 3h. Acceptance of Donation from Wallingford Rotary Foundation for food assistance and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$898 to Revenue, Acct. #2134002-47152 and to Expenditures, Acct. #21340100-58830 – Y&SS

- 3i. Acceptance of Donation for Client Assistance and consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$500 to Revenue, Acct. #2134002-47152 and to Expenditures, Acct. #21340100-58830 – Y&SS
- 3j. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$2,400 from Regular Salaries & Wages, Acct. #10010550-51000 to Secretarial, Acct. #10010550-56702 – Building Dept.
- 3k. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$2,588 – Public Works
 - \$10.00. From: 60” Mower Acct. #10030000-57000-01052
 - \$356.00 From: Chainsaws Acct. #10030000-57000-01054
 - \$2,140.00 From: Air Compressor Acct. #10030000-57000-01053
 - \$71.00 From: Wood Chipper Acct. #10030000-57000-01051
 - \$11.00 From: Pickup Truck Acct. #10030000-57000-01050

 - \$2,588.00 To: 19.5k GVW Plow Truck Acct. #10030000-57000-01049
- 3l. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$46,412 – Public Works
 - \$46,412 From: General Contingency

 - \$16,412 To: 19.5k GVW Plow Truck Acct. #10030000-57000-01049
 - \$20,000 To: Maint. of Bldgs. & Grounds Acct. #10030000-54315
 - \$10,000 To: Maint. of Vehicles Acct. #10030000-54320
- 3m. Consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$9,900 from Appropriation from Cash to Pumping Plant – Electric Pumping Equipment, Acct. #433-00325 – Water Div.
- 3n. Consider and approve Appropriation of funds in the amount of \$21,000 from Appropriation from Cash to Miscellaneous General Expense, Acct. #43100923 – Water Div.
- 3o. Consider and approve Fair Housing Resolution – Mayor
- 3p. Consider and approve Reappointment of the following Public Celebrations Commission members for a two year term effective immediately and expiring February 1, 2024: Colin Benard, Michelle Bjorkman, Patricia Coppola, Stacey Crowell, Lorraine Devaney, Roz Gallagher, Barbara Kapi, Carolyn Massoni, Ruth Palmer, Kim Pisani, Raymond Ross, Lawrence Russo – Chairman Cervoni
- 3q. Consider and approve the Appointment of Kurt Marschner, Becky Arther, and Whitney Mooney to the Public Celebrations Commission for a two year term effective immediately and expiring February 1, 2024 – Chairman Cervoni

- 3r. Consider and approve the Appointment of Tim Wall, Joe DaCunto, and Bruce Conroy as Constables for a two year term effective immediately and expiring January 7, 2024 – Chairman Cervoni
- 3s. Consider and approve the Appointment of Leslie Williams as an Alternate to the Historic Properties Commission effective immediately and expiring March 27, 2026 – Chairman Cervoni
- 3t. Consider and approve the Appointment of Jaime Hine as an Alternate to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a three year term effective immediately and expiring January 8, 2024 – Chairman Cervoni
- 3u. Consider and approve Reappointment of Mr. Robert Beaumont to the Public Utilities Commission for a three year term effective immediately and expiring March 1, 2025 – Mayor
- 3v. Approve Town Council Minutes of February 22, 2022.

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

MADE BY: LAFFIN

SECONDED BY: FISHBEIN

VOTE: ALL AYE

MOTION: PASSED

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

5. **PUBLIC QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD**

Debbie Gross, Long Hill Road, asked for an update on the parking lot and the Mayor said we are advertising for the bid to go out the early part of next week. She then asked when the bid period ends and the Mayor responded early April. Ms. Gross asked about electric car locations and the Mayor stated there is capability on the side of the lot and noted an outside vendor would be able to install a charger.

Bob Gross, Long Hill Road, asked the Mayor for update on police presence on the internet. The Mayor stated the Police Department is in touch with Web Solutions and he doesn't know if plans are finalized.

Bob Gross stated the gazebo was in last year's budget and wants to know if it will be taken care of. The Mayor said that department is well aware and has identified it as a project. Chairman Cervoni stated he thinks that is in the current year's budget.

Bob Gross inquired about a Grant Writer. The Mayor indicated all budget matters are under review.

6. Consider and approve the Appointment of Ed Storck as an Alternate to the Zoning Board of Appeals effective immediately and expiring January 8, 2024 – Chairman Cervoni

MOTION WAS MADE TO approve the Appointment of Ed Storck as an Alternate to the Zoning Board of Appeals effective immediately and expiring January 8, 2024

MADE BY: TESTA

SECONDED BY: CARMODY

Councilor Testa feels Mr. Storck is more than qualified, intelligent, and reasonable, and committed to the community. He stated this recommendation was made to Town Council after support from the DTC.

Councilor Zandri stated Town Council received an email one hour before the meeting and it misrepresented what is going on here. Councilor Zandri stated it is not true that he and Mr. Storck have only had a combative relationship and he is trying to let bygones be bygones. He stated that it bothers him that we have concern about people who can do this job but have the wrong demeanor and that could be any one of us, but when behavior is constant it is concerning. Councilor Zandri stated when these appointments come up, his responsibility is to look at everything and that he has a right as an individual on his own personal Facebook page not to be harassed.

Ed Storck, Staffordshire Commons Drive, said he has no idea why he was singled out and pulled from consent and that he has never done anything hurtful or inappropriate. He stated he was kicked off Wallingford Community page and has no idea why. Mr. Storck stated he has worked to hold people accountable, especially elected officials. He discussed social media posts he felt were inappropriate and an assault. Chairman Cervoni stated that person was not prosecuted for assault and that no one talked about his history on commission – they talked about one day.

There was further discussion and disagreement between Mr. Storck and Councilor Zandri.

Casey Camire, 219 South Main Street, stated internet makes everything terrible. She also commented that Mr. Storck is a fine man and that no one has the right to be free from criticism.

Kristi Doerr, Maiden Lane, stated that Mr. Storck is a stand-up guy and very reasonable. She feels he would do a wonderful job on this Board and there would be nobody that should be uncomfortable meeting with him.

Riley O'Connell, 30 Northford Road, wanted to make clear that any comparison between this and the Makepeace appointment is a shameful comparison.

Councilor Fishbein responded to an offhand reference to June 2020 where he made a mistake and admitted he made a mistake. He said he apologized for it and that the Town Council debated it. Councilor Fishbein stated he voted for his own censure and learned a lesson. He went on to say that people of this town in the state representative race voted that he was acceptable, and people who voted for Town Council voted he was acceptable. He went on to state that Town Council is

making an appointment and doesn't know if the public finds Mr. Storck acceptable. Councilor Fishbein stated he cannot support what is before Town Council tonight.

Councilor Zandri spoke about First Amendment rights with regard to private clubs and Facebook and that he will be voting no.

Councilor Testa stated that we can judge people based on behavior and behavior is different than speech. He went on to say that Town Council will continue to work together and continue to make decisions and to take a step back and give the benefit of doubt.

Councilor Allinson questions Mr. Storck's ability to be fair with people who have different opinions and noted that in the past he referred to R's as repugnant. She stated she doesn't think republicans or any of us are above reproach and that if she offended any one in a group, she is sorry.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

ALLINSON:	NO	TATTA:	NO
CARMODY:	YES	TESTA:	YES
FISHBEIN:	NO	ZANDRI:	NO
LAFFIN:	NO	CERVONI:	NO
MARRONE:	YES		
3 -AYE			
6 -NAY			
MOTION: FAILED			

7. Discussion and action regarding Appropriation of funds for hiring a design firm for the Historic Railroad Station – EDC

*In Attendance: Tim Ryan, Economic Development Specialist
Joe Mirra, Chairman, EDC
Robert Baltramaitis, Director, Public Works*

MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS for hiring a design firm for the Historic Railroad Station.

**MADE BY: LAFFIN
SECONDED BY: TATTA**

Mr. Ryan thanked the people that worked on the RFP project. He stated we interviewed four firms and Silver/Petrucci & Associates of Hamden received the highest composite score and he is hoping to award them the RFP tonight. He went on to explain the survey/design.

Mr. Baltramaitis stated Tim did a great job describing this. He said SP is the firm we are recommending for this project and explained that \$61,800 gets us through two steps.

Councilor Fishbein stated he is in favor of something happening with the building but troubled how we got here. He feels with the Railroad Station in its present condition, we can't just put this out for ideas. He went on to recite what the ad in the newspaper said.

Councilor Fishbein discusses the process and asked who reviewed the bid document for compliance. Mr. Ryan replied the Purchasing Agent.

Councilor Fishbein feels we have the potential of an ethics issue.

Mayor Dickinson said Purchasing doesn't have experience to write specs and they have no authority in awarding contracts - Awarding the contract goes to EDC. The Mayor said if there is a problem, EDC will not award it. Councilor Fishbein is concerned we have potential of someone having a side deal.

Councilor Fishbein asked if we are going to have drawings and Mr. Baltramaitis said it depends on the building survey.

Councilor Fishbein asked why we aren't doing an RFP to rent this. Mr. Baltramaitis said he thinks that's what we're doing.

Councilor Testa is confused by the gazebo being part of this project now and wants to know when this happened. Mr. Baltramaitis explained we asked consultants to make adjustments to Manfreda Park and the gazebo/bandstand as well, to give us a complete project. Councilor Testa stated we talked about this and it should take three days to rebuild it.

Councilor Testa went on to say that he would like a better understanding of what could be done. His primary concern is nothing gets done without placing adult education. He then inquired about the timeframe. Mr. Ryan stated two years.

Mr. Mirra stated there is no private agenda.

The Mayor commented on the Police Department building timeframe indicating the architect should be finishing their activity in 2023, then goes out to bid, and start construction in 2024.

Councilor Testa expressed concern about what we are going to do with Adult Ed.

Councilor Tatta and Mr. Ryan discussed the timeline of the grant and questioned if underground wires could be a part of this. Mr. Baltramaitis didn't think so.

Councilor Laffin stated this gets us closer to a shell. Mr. Baltramaitis said we will end up doing a demo inside.

Councilor Tatta asked if it was possible to get a copy of the RFP and Mr. Baltramaitis said yes.

Mr. Gross asked Mr. Baltramaitis if he is looking for about \$1 million and Mr. Baltramaitis said yes.

There was discussion between Mr. Gross, Tim Ryan and Mr. Baltramaitis about different grants, ARPA money and the project.

Mr. Comerford, Broadview Drive, said at a prior meeting he recalls we were going to reach out to Amtrak. Chairman Cervoni stated there has been communication with Amtrak.

Mr. Ryan explained legal things have been dealt with by the Law Department and the Electric Division has evaluated the electric apparatus. He went on to state the Law Department gave the green light.

8. Report from the Town Council Subcommittee on ARPA – Chairman Cervoni

Councilor Laffin reviewed details of the two meetings held by the Town Council Subcommittee on ARPA. He stated discussion was had regarding establishing the committee's charges, setting priorities for spending funds, and making changes to application. Councilor Laffin stated committee received feedback from local non-profits.

Councilor Zandri stated he does not want to limit non-profits if they have had ideas for use of these funds and suggested \$1 million each for non-profits, small business, and individuals. He stated he would like to see us continue with that.

Councilor Tatta stated she made a motion to not go forward with applications at this point and that should be the last step. She discussed concerns with regard to who decides who gets money. She stated she is leaning toward municipal projects that would benefit everybody such as sidewalk repair, online bill pay, Tyler Mill trails/bridges, park upgrades to name a few.

Jo Mirra, EDC, would like focus on the small business person that works day to day and pays a staff. He stated government is what put small business in this position and they need help yesterday—they don't need conversations and he would like to move on this. He suggests keeping it simple - first come first serve basis.

Bob Gross, Long Hill Road, stated to Mr. Mirra he doesn't think anyone is saying not to help small business and that the Town should have been helping people apply last year. He referred to Councilor Tatta's point and to look at parallel projects such as community pool.

Tim Ryan, EDC, stated that when ARPA program was rolled out, government was shutting down businesses and feels we have put together fund of money to try to protect them. He stated the scope of projects are broadening/widening by the minute and noted community projects were a small component and are now a main component. He feels through the application process we can assess/identify what need is and that was the intent of the money. He went on to say projects have nothing to do with COVID and we should first focus on businesses then projects.

It was decided the next two meetings of the Town Council Subcommittee will be held on March 15th and March 29th time and place to be determined.

9. Discussion and possible action to approve redistricting in accordance with the map provided by the Registrar's Office – Registrar of Voters

*In Attendance: Robert Avery, Registrar of Voters
Joan Parisi, Registrar of Voters*

MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE REDISTRICTING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MAP PROVIDED BY THE REGISTRAR’S OFFICE.

**MADE BY: LAFFIN
SECONDED BY: ALLINSON**

Chairman Cervoni asked Registrars how they came up with the map that was provided. Mr. Avery said they didn’t draw anything, the State did.

Ms. Parisi and Mr. Avery discussed details of the map with the Council. Ms. Parisi stated population in most districts is fairly equal and they have input canvass results and are working with a clean voter registry.

Councilor Testa asked about change in district 1—moving line north? Ms. Parisi answered yes, that old district 1 is incorporated to the lower portion of 9 near the North Haven line and the 90th encompasses all of what used to be district 1. She went on to say it disenfranchises voters that live near North Haven to go to Rock Hill School to vote. Councilor Testa asked if the State changed legislative districts and Ms. Parisi answered yes. The Mayor stated the issue is what ballot you will see in the polling place you go to.

Councilor Marrone asked Registrars if they could give the numbers of voters in each district once data is input and Ms. Parisi stated it will basically be pretty even and that it doesn’t have to be because we vote at large. Councilor Marrone asked if there was anywhere else Rock Hill voters could vote and Ms. Parisi said yes, that could be discussed when this is all done.

Councilor Testa made a Friendly Amendment to approve map as drawn with a portion of District 8 moved into District 3.

Councilor Allinson Seconds.

Vote on Friendly Amendment:

ROLL CALL VOTE:

ALLINSON: YES	TATTA: ABSTAIN
CARMODY: YES	TESTA: YES
FISHBEIN: ABSENT (Left Early)	ZANDRI: YES
LAFFIN: YES	CERVONI: YES
MARRONE: YES	

7 -AYE

1 -ABSENT

1-ABSTAIN

MOTION: PASSED

- 10. Discussion and Possible action regarding the re-creation of the Town of Wallingford Maintenance Advisory Committee – Councilor Zandri

Councilor Zandri discussed how an advisory committee could help departments assess the maintenance and repair of town property, parks, and sidewalks. He stated an Advisory

Committee, with different areas of expertise, might save money and time spent on repairing, repainting, re-plastering, etc. vs. replacing.

Councilor Marrone stated this is a fantastic idea and is in support of this.

Councilor Laffin inquired where the authority lies and why did it stop existing. Councilor Zandri stated there was a level of frustration and push back with not seeing results.

Chairman Cervoni stated the ARPA Subcommittee is only for the duration of this Council.

Councilor Allinson asked if Councilors and the public would be on the Committee. Councilor Zandri stated people with expertise and understanding of engineering and who have an interest in their parks etc.

The Mayor stated it would have to be clear that it is advisory.

Mr. Comerford, stated he has been taking pictures of the Town Hall for 15 years and still sees the same problems. He feels this would be an avenue for town workers and tax payers to present issues.

Councilor Zandri stated this should go to Ordinance Committee and remarked it's not a two year thing, and set up discussion for appointment terms.

11. Executive Session pursuant to the CGS Section 1-225(f) and Section 1-200(6)(B) regarding strategy and negotiations with respect to the pending tax appeal matter of *United Concrete Products v. Town of Wallingford* – Law Dept.

MOTION WAS MADE TO MOVE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 10:03 P.M.

MADE BY: LAFFIN

SECONDED BY: ALLINSON

MOTION WAS MADE TO MOVE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION pursuant to Section 1-200(6)(D) of the CGS with respect to the purchase, sale and/or leasing of property.

MOTION WAS MADE TO MOVE OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 10:08 P.M.

MADE BY: LAFFIN

SECONDED BY: ALLINSON

VOTE: ALL AYE

MOTION: PASSED

Time of Executive Session 10:03 p.m. to 10:08 p.m.

Attendance at Executive Session:

ALLINSON	MAYOR WILLIAM W. DICKINSON, JR.
CARMODY	TOWN ATTORNEY GERALD E. FARRELL, SR.
LAFFIN	
MARRONE	
TATTA	
TESTA	
ZANDRI	
CERVONI	

MOTION TO ADJOURN
MADE BY: TATTA
SECONDED BY: ALLINSON
VOTE: ALL AYE
MOTION PASSED

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Moss
 Council Staff
 Meeting digitally recorded

RECEIVED FOR RECORD 3-11-22
 AT 4:30 P.M. AND RECEIVED BY
Deborah McKiernan TOWN CLERK

Vincent Cervoni, Chairman Date

Deborah McKiernan, Town Clerk Date