

MINUTES
VERNON TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
TOWN HALL – 14 PARK PLACE – 3RD FLOOR
TUESDAY OCTOBER 18, 2022 7:30 PM

RECEIVED
VERNON TOWN CLERK
22 OCT 24 PM 12:07

Mayor Daniel A. Champagne called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM

A.) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Recited

B.) ROLL CALL

Present: Council Members Laura Bush, Bill Campbell, Julie Clay, Linda Gessay, Maryann Levesque, Brian Motola, John O'Connell, Teri Lynn Rogers, Jim Tedford, Michael Wendus

Absent: None

Entered During Meeting: Ann Letendre, Ariana Nieves-Matias

Also Present: Assistant Town Administrator Michael Purcaro, Recording Secretary Jennifer Walker

C.) CITIZEN CITATIONS AND AWARDS

None

D.) CITIZENS FORUM (7:31PM)

Genaro Gonzales, 133 West Main St, spoke on the upcoming election and on various topics.

End 7:36PM

F.) PUBLIC HEARING

None

G.) PRESENTATIONS BY THE ADMINISTRATION 7:PM

Carnival Committee members Steve Wakefield and Pauline Schaefer spoke briefly and presented the proceeds of the 2022 Carnival (\$13,000) to Mayor Daniel A. Champagne.

Mayor Daniel A. Champagne updated the Town Council on various topics.

1. The **2022 Socktober** event is underway. Tommy Glinski a student at Rockville High School has been collecting socks for the homeless and those in need for the last seven years. On the table this evening is a flyer for this project. Socks will be collected through November 15, 2022. Collection boxes are located in Town Hall, Vernon Police Department, Parks and Recreation and many business around Tolland County. Socks are donated to our local homeless shelter and others in Tolland and Hartford County.
2. **Fire Marshal Grant** - Earlier Fire Marshal Dan Wasilewski submitted grant paperwork to the Town Council to purchase equipment. The grant has been awarded to the Town of Vernon in the amount of \$429.

3. ***North Central District Health Department*** has been award an Opioid Abuse Prevention Grant for \$300,000. The theme of the grant is “Implementing Overdose Strategies at the Local Level”. This grant was offered nationwide by NACCHO – National Association of County and City Health Officials. Fifteen grants were funded and NCDHD was one of them. This grant will allow the District to focus on four strategic areas: surveillance and data sharing, partnership with public safety and first responders, implementation of a communications campaign and promote harm reduction. The Town of Vernon is one of the towns served by NCDHD and we are happy to join them in the effort.
4. ***Trunk or Treat*** - is planned for Henry Park, Thursday evening October 27th from 4:30 – 7:00 PM. This is a drive thru event. Trunk or Treat was a huge success last year and we are looking forward to seeing the kids in their creative costumes.
5. ***Wreath’s Across America*** is planned for December 17, 2022 at Lugg Field with the ceremony beginning promptly at 12:00 Noon. The Committee has extended an invitation to the Town Council. Please rsvp through Administration.
6. ***Reminder:*** There is only one meeting in November. November 15, 2022 is our only meeting in November. Please mark your calendars.
7. ***I would like to end with a moment of silence for the Bristol Police Officers lost in the line of duty this week.***

H.) ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Bush, made a motion to move the Consent Agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

- C 1.** **Request the Town Council approve the tax refunds for prior and current year taxes as outlined in the memorandum from Terry Hjarne, Collector of Revenue.** (See memorandum dated October 6, 2022 to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator from Terry Hjarne, Collector of Revenue relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THREE (3) TAX REFUNDS FOR PRIOR YEARS TOTALING \$365.04 AND FORTY (40) REFUNDS FOR CURRENT YEAR TOTALING \$13,706.34 AS OUTLINED IN THE MEMORANDUM FROM TERRY HJARNE, COLLECTOR OF REVENUE TO MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR DATED OCTOBER 6, 2022.

- C 2.** **Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne’s appointment of Carmen Melaragno, (R), 71 Pearl Drive, Vernon, Connecticut as a regular member of the Water Pollution Control Authority, said term to commence on October 19, 2022 and expires December 31, 2022.** (A copy of Mr. Melaragno’s resume is included for Council review. Mr. Melaragno will be completing the unexpired term of Kevin Kearney.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO CHARTER CHAPTER VIII, SEC. 3; AND CHARTER CHAPTER XII, SEC. 4, THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF CARMEN MELARAGNO, (R), 71 PEARL DRIVE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT, AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY, SAID APPOINTMENT TO COMMENCE ON OCTOBER 19, 2022 AND EXPIRES DECEMBER 31, 2022.

I.) DISCUSSION OF PULLED CONSENT ITEMS

None

J.) PENDING BUSINESS

None

K.) NEW BUSINESS

1. **Request the Town Council approve the disposal of items for the Vernon Public Schools.** (See memorandum from William Meier, Director of Business and Finance dated September 28, 2022 to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator and Mayor Daniel A. Champagne relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE DISPOSAL OF ASSETS AS DISCLOSED ON THE REQUEST FOR DISPOSAL OF FIXED ASSETS FORMS FOR THE VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member O'Connell, made a motion to approve the disposal of assets as disclosed on the request for disposal of fixed assets forms for the Vernon Public Schools. Motion carried unanimously.

2. **Request the Town Council approve the disposal of items for the Vernon Police Department.** (See memorandum from Jeffrey A. O'Neill, Finance Officer and Treasurer dated October 13, 2022 related to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE DISPOSAL OF ASSETS AS DISCLOSED IN THE REQUEST FOR DISPOSAL OF FIXED ASSETS MEMORANDUM FOR THE VERNON POLICE DEPARTMENT.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made a motion to approve the disposal of assets as disclosed on the request for disposal of fixed assets forms for the Vernon Police Department. Motion carried unanimously.

4. **Request the Town Council approve the resolution required for all Small Cities Applications.** (See resolution entitled Certified Resolution of Applicant Small Cities Program relative to the \$150,000.00 application for Kids Safe authorized by the Town Council and previously applied for.)

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

THE VERNON TOWN COUNCIL APPROVES THE RESOLUTION ENTITLED "CERTIFIED RESOLUTION OF APPLICANT FOR SMALL CITIES PROGRAM," IN THE AMOUNT OF \$150,000.00 ON BEHALF OF KIDS SAFE.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Bush, made a motion to approve the resolution entitled "Certified Resolution of Applicant for Small Cities Program", in the amount \$150,000.00 on behalf of Kids Safe. Discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously.

L.) INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

Proposed Ordinance entitled "Ordinance No. _____, An Ordinance entitled "Conversion of an Existing Non-Conforming Static Billboard located at 57 Hartford Turnpike to a Digital Display". Repealing and Replacing Ordinance #319, entitled "Conversion of an Existing Non-Conforming Static Billboard located at 51 Hartford Turnpike to a Digital Display" (See Ordinance attached for Council review. A new number will be assigned once the Ordinance has passed Town Council vote.)"

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL, CONSISTENT WITH CHAPTER V, OF THE VERNON TOWN CHARTER, SEC. 6, ENTITLED "PUBLIC HEARING ON AND PUBLICATION OF ORDINANCES," HEREBY SCHEDULES AS PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING, **ORDINANCE NO. _____ "CONVERSION OF AN EXISTING NON-CONFORMING STATIC BILLBOARD LOCATED AT 57 HARTFORD TURNPIKE TO A DIGITAL DISPLAY"**, SAID PUBLIC HEARING TO TAKE PLACE AT 7:35 PM ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2022 LOCATED AT THE TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, THIRD FLOOR, 14 PARK PLACE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT TO RECEIVE COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS RELATIVE TO THE PROPOSED ORDINANCE.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Tedford, made a motion to schedule a public hearing regarding ORDINANCE NO. _____ "CONVERSION OF AN EXISTING NON-CONFORMING STATIC BILLBOARD LOCATED AT 57 HARTFORD TURNPIKE TO A DIGITAL DISPLAY", said public hearing to take place at 7:35 PM on Tuesday, November 15, 2022 located at the Town Council chambers, third floor, 14 Park Place, Vernon, Connecticut to receive comments and questions relative to the proposed ordinance. Discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously.

K.) NEW BUSINESS (cont'd) 7:50PM

3. Request the Town Council authorize the transfer of FY 2021-2022 funds from the Board of Education Operating Budget to the Capital and Non-Recurring Education Account in the amount of \$425,000.00. (See letter from Dr. Joseph P. Macary, Superintendent of Schools to Mayor Daniel A. Champagne dated September 28, 2022 relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL APPROVES THE TRANSFER OF \$425,000.00 FROM AVAILABLE FUNDS IN THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OPERATING BUDGET FY 2021-2022 TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION RESERVE FUND FOR CAPITAL AND NON-RECURRING EXPENDITURES

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made a motion to approve the transfer of \$425,000.00 from the available funds in the Board of Education Operating Budget FY 2021-2022 to the Board of Education Reserve Fund for Capital and Non-Recurring Expenditures. Superintendent Dr. Macary answered questions and a discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously.

M.) ACTION ON ORDINANCE (S) PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED

None

N.) IDENTIFICATION/ADOPTION OF ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS

None

O.) DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL ITEMS AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

None

P.) ADOPTION OF MINUTES

THE TOWN COUNCIL WAIVES THE READING OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING ON ***OCTOBER 3, 2022*** AND THAT MINUTES OF SAID MEETING BE APPROVED.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Rogers, made a motion to waive the reading of and approve the minutes of the October 3, 2022 regular town Council meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Q.) INFORMATIONAL ITEMS, PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, CORRESPONDENCE, REPORTS, ETC. NOT REQUIRING ACTION

None

E.) EXECUTIVE SESSION

8:06 PM Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Bush, made the following motion to go into Executive Session #1:

EXECUTIVE SESSION #1

THE TOWN COUNCIL PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY GIVEN IN CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES 1-200 (6) (D), HEREBY MOVES TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS AND INVITES MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, SOCIAL SERVICE DIRECTOR MATT HELLMAN AND HVCC DIRECTOR DAVID O'ROURKE TO ATTEND AS NEEDED.

Motion carried unanimously.

8:22 PM Matt Hellman and David O'Rourke entered the session.

8:37 PM Council Member Gessay exited the session and returned at 8:38 PM

8:54 PM Matt Hellman and David O'Rourke exited the session.

9:38 PM Executive Session #1 ended.

9:38 PM Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made a motion to extend curfew until the end of business. Motion carried unanimously.

9:38 PM Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made the following motion to go into Executive Session #2:

EXECUTIVE SESSION #2

THE TOWN COUNCIL, PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY GIVEN IN CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES 1-200, (6) (B), HEREBY MOVES TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING REAL ESTATE TAX APPEALS: ***MAL GJONBALAY VS TOWN OF VERNON ET AL., (610 AND 624 TALCOTTVILLE ROAD, VERNON, CONNECTICUT.)*** AND INVITES MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMISTRATOR: DAVID WHEELER, TOWN ASSESSOR AND TOWN ATTORNEY LOU SPADACCINI TO ATTEND.

Motion carried unanimously.

9:39 PM David Wheeler and Lou Spadaccini entered the session.

9:41 PM Council Member Wendus and Council Member exited the session.

9:50 PM Executive Session #2 ended.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Wendus, made the following motion to Executive Session #1:

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE USE OF ARPA FUNDS TO PROVIDE CONTINUED FUNDING FOR THE SECOND YEAR OF THE TOWN'S AGREEMENT WITH THE HOCKANUM VALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL (HVCC) FOR COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$84,000.00.

Motion carried unanimously.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Wendus, made the following motion to Executive Session #1:

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE USE OF ARPA FUNDS TO COMPLETE THE WINDERMERE FIELDS PROJECT. FURTHER, THE TOWN COUNCIL CONSISTENT WITH THE TOWN OF VERNON PROCUREMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, DIRECTS ADMINISTRATION TO RETURN WITH DEFINITIVE PRICING FOR SAME.

Motion carried unanimously.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Bush, made the following motion to Executive Session #1:

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE USE OF ARPA FUNDS TO PROVIDE THE STATE REQUIRED MATCH FOR THE FOX HILL TOWER RENOVATION PROJECT. FURTHER, THE TOWN COUNCIL CONSISTENT WITH THE TOWN OF VERNON PROCUREMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, DIRECTS ADMINISTRATION TO RETURN WITH DEFINITIVE PRICING FOR SAME.

Motion carried unanimously.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made the following motion to Executive Session #1:

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE USE OF ARPA FUNDS FOR THE PURPOSE OF INSTALLING A SEASONAL ICE RINK AT HENRY PARK. FURTHER, THE TOWN COUNCIL CONSISTENT WITH THE TOWN OF VERNON PROCUREMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, DIRECTS ADMINISTRATION TO RETURN WITH DEFINITIVE PRICING FOR SAME.

Motion carried unanimously.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member O'Connell, made the following motion to Executive Session #1:

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE USE OF ARPA FUNDS FOR THE PURPOSE OF REPAIRING, REPLACING AND INSTALLING GUARDRAIL AT SELECTED LOCATIONS. FURTHER, THE TOWN COUNCIL CONSISTENT WITH THE TOWN OF VERNON PROCUREMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, DIRECTS ADMINISTRATION TO RETURN WITH DEFINITIVE PRICING FOR SAME.

Motion carried unanimously.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Rogers, made the following motion to Executive Session #2:

THE TOWN COUNCIL AUTHORIZES THE TOWN ATTORNEY LOU SPADACCINI TO SETTLE A TAX APPEAL CAPTIONED "MAL GJONBALAJVS V. TOWN OF VERNON ET AL." FOR TAXES ON THE GRAND LIST OF OCTOBER 1, 2021 FOR THE ASSESSED VALUE OF \$220,500 OR THE 100% FAIR MARKET VALUE OF \$315,000 AND TO ADJUST ASSESSMENT AND TAX BILL FOR THE 2021 GRAND LIST, FOR THE PROPERTY KNOWN AS **624 TALCOTTVILLE ROAD, MAP 08, BLOCK 0025, LOT 0008A.**

Motion carried with 10 in favor and two abstentions: Council Member Tedford and Council Member Wendus.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made the following motion to Executive Session #2:

THE TOWN COUNCIL AUTHORIZES THE TOWN ATTORNEY LOU SPADACCINI TO SETTLE A TAX APPEAL CAPTIONED "MAL GJONBALAJVS V. TOWN OF VERNON ET AL." FOR TAXES ON THE GRAND LIST OF OCTOBER 1, 2021 FOR THE ASSESSED VALUE OF \$102,900.00 OR THE 100% FAIR MARKET VALUE OF \$147,000.00 AND TO ADJUST ASSESSMENT AND TAX BILL

THE TOWN COUNCIL AUTHORIZES THE TOWN ATTORNEY LOU SPADACCINI TO SETTLE A TAX APPEAL CAPTIONED "MAL GJONBALAJVS V. TOWN OF VERNON ET AL." FOR TAXES ON THE GRAND LIST OF OCTOBER 1, 2021 FOR THE ASSESSED VALUE OF \$102,900.00 OR THE 100% FAIR MARKET VALUE OF \$147,000.00 AND TO ADJUST ASSESSMENT AND TAX BILL FOR THE 2021 GRAND LIST., FOR THE PROPERTY KNOWN AS **610 TALCOTTVILLE ROAD, MAP 08, BLOCK 0025, LOT 00008.**

Motion carried with 10 in favor and two abstentions: Council Member Tedford and Council Member Wendus.

ADJOURN (9:56 PM)

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Bush, made a motion to adjourn.
Motion carried unanimously.

Received:

Approved:


Jennifer Walker
Recording Secretary