TOWN COUNCIL
WATERTOWN, CONNECTICUT

MONDAY, JUNE 3, 2024
SPECIAL TOWN MEETINGS – 6:30 P.M. AND 6:45 P.M.
REGULAR MEETING – 7:00 P.M.

MINTUES

WATERTOWN TOWN HALL
TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS
61 ECHO LAKE RD.
WATERTOWN, CT 06795

1. Call Meeting to Order.
   Jonathan Ramsay called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.
   Jonathan Ramsay led the pledge of allegiance.

3. Roll Call.

   PRESENT: Robert Desena
             Gary Lafferty
             Carina Noyd
             Jonathan Ramsay
             Robert Retallick
             Rachael Ryan (remote)

   ABSENT: Mary Ann Rosa, Chair
            Ken Demirs, Vice Chair
            Anthony DiBona

   OTHERS PRESENT: Mark Raimo, Town Manager
4. Public Comment.
Al Mickel, 95 Woodvine Avenue asked that Public Comment be changed to Public Participation and that it be in the beginning and at the end of the agenda.

Frankie Popilowski, Chestnut Avenue asked why we are paying for tax refunds and why it is always on the agenda?

Al Mickel, 95 Woodvine Avenue asked why the guidelines were not read into the meeting.

Elliot Longo, Bella Vista Drive stated he supported line item 10f and it will help address some of the concerns. Mr. Longo talked about the Fiscal Year 23 audit report and summary and had comments.

Frankie Popilowski asked questions in regards to the special town meeting.
Jonathan Ramsay answered it was discussed at an earlier meeting before the regular meeting.

5. Recognitions – none.

6. Minutes.

   a. May 6, 2024 - Public Hearing

Motion: Robert Desena seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to approve the Public Hearing minutes dated May 6, 2024 as amended.

Gary Lafferty noted a correction, that he was not here for the public hearing portion of the meeting and here for the Regular Meeting portion.

Aye: 5 Retallick, Desena, Ramsay, Noyd, Ryan
Nay: 0
Abstain: 1 Lafferty

Motion passes
b. May 20, 2024 - Regular Meeting

Motion: Robert Desena seconded by Carina Noyd: I move to approve the Regular Meeting minutes dated May 20, 2024 as amended.

Carina Noyd noted a correction on page 4, the second paragraph down I believe the $70,000 should be $71,000 in the first line and in the third line fifth should be fifty.

Aye: 5 Desena, Ramsay, Noyd, Lafferty, Ryan
Nay: 0
Abstain: 1 Retallick

Motion passes

c. May 29, 2024 - Special Meeting

Motion: Robert Desena seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to approve the Special Meeting minutes dated May 29, 2024 as presented.

Discussion: none.

Aye: 5 Desena, Noyd, Lafferty, Ryan, Retallick
Nay: 0
Abstain: 1 Ramsay

Motion passes

   a. Correspondence.

8. Subcommittee Reports
   a. Public Works

Robert Retallick reported:
From the Highway Department:

All road closures and major road work are being posted to the Towns Main Website, DPW Website and Towns Facebook Page.

Woolson St Bridge Project – Bridge is closed for final work and is anticipated to be opened NLT 4 JUL Holiday Weekend
Guernsey town Road – West Road is closed at Guernsey Town for the realignment (horizontally) and elevation cut (vertically). Guernseytown Road has been shifted to the West approximately 40 feet. This is the biggest part of the job for better sightline for West Road onto Guernsey town Road

Hungerford Road – Completed!!! We are working on punch list items – First day of paving in 2024 was started on 6 MAY 2024!!!

Middlebury Road – Full Depth Reconstruction is underway from Bunker Hill to Route 6. One Failed Culvert has been replaced.

   Mark Raimo reported:
   1. I received a letter from MIRA which is the authority that collects our garbage located down Echo Lake Road by the bus barn. They are trying to sell off property down at the end of Echo Lake Road which they are going to list for $699,000. We will take a look at the property to see if it is something that would benefit the Town.
   2. We did conduct interviews for the Finance Director last Thursday, we will be conducting the second round of interviews scheduled this week to seek a viable candidate.
   3. Our audit RFP has gone out and is circulating, getting responses from accounting firms to fulfill that obligation.
   4. We did hire an Assistant Finance Director, her name is Maria Guerrera she started last Thursday.
   5. The 2023 audit is completed, submitted to the state and has been posted on our website.
   6. Susan Zappone retired on Friday she has come back as of today on a part-time basis and will continue until we are able to transition and taken care of our succession planning with the proposed CLA process. We will be appointing Susan as the Acting Finance Director in the interim until we appoint the Finance Director. I think it is important for her to give some succession understanding as she transitions out of the organization.
   7. Today I met with the Chief of Police and the Fire Chief and we talked about our communications console within the Police Department. If you recall we received a 3.4-million-dollar grant from Johanna Hayes Congressional Discretionary Funds. We have identified that our console for dispatch is in critical condition and it may not make it when we start expending the funds from that grant. Just giving the heads up that we may be coming for an appropriation to take care of that if needed.
Gary Lafferty asked the new hire, the Assistant Finance is she familiar with any of the new programs that we have?

Mark Raimo. Town Manager answered Maria Guerrera has experience, she was the Finance Director in Harwinton. She left Harwinton and went to the private sector and she desired to come back to the municipality side. She does have some experience; not direct experience and she is in Clear Gov working on it.


a. Consider an appropriation from the General Fund in the amount of $4,922.23 for Police overtime. Funds have been received from the State of Connecticut for distracted driving and high visibility enforcement.

Motion: Robert Desena seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to authorize an appropriation in the amount of $4,922.23 for Police overtime. Funds have been received from the State of Connecticut for distracted driving and high visibility enforcement.

Discussion: none.

Motion passed unanimously

b. Consider an appropriation of $12,000; $6,000 from the Water Operations Fund Balance and $6,000 from the Sewer Operations Fund balance for Water and Sewer overtime due to emergency water main leaks, repairs, and flushing activities.

Motion: Robert Desena seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to authorize an appropriation of $12,000 of which $6,000 will come from the Water Operations Fund Balance and $6,000 from the Sewer Operations Fund balance for Water and Sewer overtime due to emergency water main leaks, repairs, and flushing activities.

Discussion: none.

Motion passed unanimously

c. Consider an appropriation in the amount of $15,000; $7,500 from the Water Operations Fund Balance and $7,500 from the Sewer Operations Fund Balance to the Water and Sewer legal services line items to cover costs associated with the Waterbury vs. Watertown Water and Sewer litigation.
Motion: Robert Desena seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to authorize an appropriation in the amount of $15,000; $7,500 from the Water Operations Fund Balance and $7,500 from the Sewer Operations Fund Balance to the Water and Sewer legal services line items to cover costs associated with the Waterbury vs. Watertown Water and Sewer litigation.

Discussion: none.

Motion passed unanimously

d. Consider an appropriation in the amount of $24,000 from the Water Capital Fund Balance to the Water and Sewer Department’s Cleaning Inspect Water Storage line item. Funds required for water quality and CT Department of Public Health compliance requirements for the Scoville and Georgetown water storage tanks.

Motion: Robert Desena seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to authorize an appropriation in the amount of $24,000 from the Water Capital Fund Balance to the Water and Sewer Department’s Cleaning Inspect Water Storage line item. Funds required for water quality and CT Department of Public Health compliance requirements for the Scoville and Georgetown water storage tanks.

Jonathan Ramsay asked why it was not included in the budget

David McMahon, Assistant Superintendent of Water & Sewer answered the contractor that we hired to do the survey was after the budget. The deficiency that was found on the Scoville storage tank needs to be fixed per DPH.

Motion passed unanimously

e. Consider an appropriation from the General Fund in the amount of $5,300 to the Public Works guidemails line item for guiderail repairs due to a motor vehicle accident on Davis Street. Funds received from the responsible driver’s insurance carrier.

Motion: Robert Desena seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to authorize an appropriation from the General Fund in the amount of $5,300 to the Public Works guidemails line item for guiderail repairs due to a motor vehicle accident on Davis Street. Funds received from the responsible driver’s insurance carrier.

Discussion: none.

Motion passed unanimously
f. Consider an appropriation in the amount of $18,500 from the General Fund for the engagement of a firm to perform financial operational assessment services.

Motion: Robert Desena seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to authorize an appropriation in the amount of $18,500 from the General Fund for the engagement of a firm to perform financial operational assessment services.

Mark Raimo, Town Manager stated I talked with the Finance Director and the Assistant Finance Director before she left, we talked about areas that we should look at moving forward. Number one, is to ensure that we have the best business practice that we can have. Second, that we can have an independent source look at our processes to regain the trust of the public. The scope of professional services is conducted under eight topics. CLA who we have asked to come in and give us a proposal and have conducted interviews with key stake holders to review and evaluate the overall strengths and weaknesses of the current financial operations. I think it will be very important for us to engage Susan Zappone before she leaves as we go through the interview process with the new Finance Director so that person will have an opportunity to have some insight. This scope of work is considered to start within the two weeks of our approval of this and they anticipate that it will take approximately 8 to 10 weeks to complete. They will also interview and review the backgrounds of all financial operations, personnel to confirm the roles and responsibilities, review the current technology and the use to support the financial operations and that is again talking about the actual financial software we are using to ensure that is the proper software for the makeup of Watertown. To identify current alignment and operational weaknesses within the financial operations and develop proposed improvements and having a review of our policy and procedures, update them if need be. Propose organizational staffing adjustments associated with the segregation of duties, responsibilities as required, a review from the outside source and then they will provide us concrete recommendations for future state improvements which will allow us a road map to move forward. In discussing further this scope, we feel that there is room for improvement and we look forward to this report and regain any trust issues that we may have with the public.

Gary Lafferty asked if this company deals with municipalities?

Mark Raimo, Town Manager answered yes, they are the leading accounting firm in the State of Connecticut. I believe they audit for 79 municipalities in the State of Connecticut.

Jonathan Ramsay asked how did we find this company?

Mark Raimo, Town Manager answered it was recommendations from other Town Managers, I did some research on the internet and called a few organizations. CLA was one organization I felt comfortable with they have gone through this process with several other towns.
Jonathan Ramsay asked in the fine print related to the fee it is $18,500 which is what we are appropriating tonight but it throws an extra 5% technology fee which in theory is above and beyond our 18,500. Can I assume there is a good chance we will need to add a little more money at it later.

Mark Raimo, Town Manager answered it is a possibility, I am thinking we are coming in at the 18,500 but there is always a possibility we could have overruns.

Jonathan Ramsay asked did they give you an estimate of the number of hours that they would be working for the 18,500.

Mark Raimo, Town Manager answered I don’t recall discussing an actual list of hours. We were very comfortable in our discussions between that 8 to 10-week period they will complete this within the time frame. I explained how important it is to come within budget, they are fully understanding of that.

Jonathan Ramsay asked do we know how quickly they can start?

Mark Raimo answered within two weeks of us signing off on it.

Robert Retallick commented I used them in a previous industry that I was in charge of and CLA is a nationwide company that is very well respected within the industry.

Rachael Ryan stated I think this is an excellent idea, thank you so much for doing that and asked do you have any idea if they are going to rely on artificial intelligence for doing some of their research.

Mark Raimo, Town Manager answered I don’t believe it was involving that but I will certainly ask that question and get back to you.

Motion passed unanimously

g. Consider a resolution authorizing an appropriation from the General Fund in the amount of $2,545 for tax refunds.

9

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, taxpayers have applied for Tax Refunds pursuant to Section 12-129, Refund of Excess Payments; and
WHEREAS, the Tax Collector recommended that the refunds be made in accordance with the provisions of Section 12-129; and

WHEREAS, in order to refund taxpayers we have been approved for their refunds, monies must be appropriated into the budget line item to expend the funds.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council appropriates $2,545 to line item 010-50341-043-0102 from the General Fund for tax refunds.

Dated at Watertown, Connecticut this 3rd day of June, 2024.

Mary Ann Rosa, Chair
Watertown Town Council

Motion: Robert Desena seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to authorize a resolution authorizing an appropriation from the General Fund in the amount of $2,545 for tax refunds.

Discussion: none.

Motion passed unanimously

h. Consider a resolution authorizing tax refunds.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, taxpayers have made applications for property tax refunds in accordance with C.G.S. Section 12-129 Refunds of Excess Payment:

WHEREAS, the Tax Collector recommends that the refunds be made in accordance with the provisions of Section 12-1298;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council approves the attached listing of tax refunds.

Dated at Watertown, Connecticut this 3rd day of June, 2024.

Mary Ann Rosa, Chair
Watertown Town Council

See attached
Motion: Robert Desena seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to approve a resolution authorizing tax refunds.

Discussion: none.

Motion passed unanimously

11. Adjournment.

Motion: Robert Desena seconded by Robert Retallick: to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 7:31 p.m.

Motion passed unanimously

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Ramsay, Council Member
Watertown Town Council

Approved:

Susan King, Clerk
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>City/State/Zip</th>
<th>Prop Loc/Vehicle info.</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Tax</th>
<th>Int</th>
<th>Fee</th>
<th>Refund</th>
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<td>2022-03-0051799</td>
<td>CLIFFORD ALYSSA</td>
<td>96 COLONIAL ST</td>
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