



**TOWN COUNCIL
WATERTOWN, CONNECTICUT**

**MONDAY, JUNE 5, 2023
REGULAR MEETING – 7:00 P.M.
MINUTES**

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

1. Call Meeting to Order.

Chairman Jonathan Ramsay called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Jonathan Ramsay led the pledge of allegiance.

3. Roll Call.

PRESENT: Jonathan Ramsay, Chairman
Mary Ann Rosa, Vice Chair
Ken Demirs
Robert Desena
Anthony DiBona
Gary Lafferty
Robert Retallick
Denise Russ

ABSENT: Rachael Ryan

OTHERS PRESENT: Mark Raimo, Town Manager
Susan Zappone, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director

4. Public Participation.

Al Mickel, 95 Woodvine Avenue asked that the Public Participation guidelines from 2016 be brought up to the current time frame. Mr. Mickel asked for public participation through zoom be allowed if you are unable to attend. Mr. Mickel asked how much of the funds from ARPA are left and if the ARPA sub-committee is going to meet again.

Chair Jonathan Ramsay stated we will talk about when it comes up on the agenda.

Barbara Zulkeski, 17 Mallory Road talked about an existing park called Adams Park abandoned by town and asked for better maintenance with the fence falling apart and having trespassers. She asked if beautification could happen to the existing parks. Ms. Zulkeski asked if crosswalks and traffic signals could be used for the new park.

Katherine Camara, 31 Cottage Place talked about the bill for legal expenses and the letter from Attorney Jessell in the packet in regards to the Sealy property. Ms. Camara talked about an investigation ...

Robert Retallick stated through the Chair this is getting into a personnel issue.

Chair Jonathan Ramsay stated you cannot discuss personnel issues here.

Katherine Camara continued speaking.

Robert Retallick told the Chair this cannot be discussed it is hearsay.

Katherine Camara continued talking.

Vice Chair Mary Ann Rosa asked that the microphone be turned off.

Katherine Camara continued talking after the microphone was shut off.

Vice Chair Mary Ann Rosa stated that she would be ejected.

Katherine Camara continued.

Vice Chair Mary Ann Rosa stated your time is up.

Katherine Camara questioned the timing for the meeting.

Mark Raimo, Town Manager responded to the comments made by Ms. Camara and stated she continually takes points of positive and turns it into a negative. Mr. Raimo concluded I am proud to be the Town Manager, I am proud to be a member of our community.

5. Recognition – none.

6. Minutes.

a. Budget Public Hearing – April 26, 2023

Motion: Mary Ann Rosa seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to approve the Budget Public Hearing minutes dated April 26, 2023 as presented.

Discussion: none.

Aye: 7 Ramsay, Rosa, Demirs, Desena, DiBona, Retallick, Russ

Nay: 0

Abstain: 1 Lafferty

Motion passes

b. Regular Meeting – May 15, 2023

Motion: Mary Ann Rosa seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to accept the Regular Meeting minutes dated May 15, 2023 as presented.

Discussion: none.

Aye: 6 Ramsay, Demirs, Desena, Lafferty, Retallick, Russ

Nay: 0

Abstain: 2 DiBona, Rosa

Motion passes

7. Chairman's Report

a. Correspondence.

1. Letter from Laurine Gambardella appointing Cindy Blanchard as Democratic Deputy Registrar dated May 25, 2023
2. Letter from Town Attorney relating to legal fees that were previously mentioned in Public Participation.

8. Town Manager's Report.

Mark Raimo reported:

1. We have identified a shortfall in the health fund as we approach the closing of the fiscal year. We have taken a short-term loan from the General Fund in the amount of \$500,000. This temporary measure will give us time to determine the exact shortfall on that health fund and how we would move forward. We will talk about setting a special meeting so that we can appropriate the appropriate funding to keep the fund liquid.

2. I have been made aware of a budgetary shortfall with the BOE budget I am respectfully requesting that the Town Council make a motion and add to the agenda that a special town meeting be set to consider this appropriation as well. At the next special town meeting, the shortage amount is \$2,707,066 which \$1,095,000 can be mitigated by a FEMA grant in which we received and hope to have that money in our hands by the end of this fiscal year. We did receive an invoice from the feds and it appears that money should be in route to us shortly.
3. I have received a few RFP requests that we can use as examples to identify our needs in looking at shared services for better efficiencies for the town and the BOE.
4. There is 3.9 million dollars left of the ARPA funds and we can discuss on how we would go about dispersing that if you choose to.

9. Subcommittee Reports.

Chair Jonathan Ramsay stated we are in the process of scheduling another meeting for the Senior Tax Relief Sub-committee, we have to get a date where everyone is available.

Motion: Mary Ann Rosa seconded by Ken Demirs: I move to add to the agenda under New Business to set a Special Town Meeting to consider an appropriation in the amount of \$2,707,066 to the Board of Education for Fiscal Year 2023.

Discussion: none.

Motion passed unanimously

10. New Business

- a. Discussion and possible action on revisions to the *Public Participation Guidelines*.

Mary Ann Rosa the next item is a motion relative to the Public Participation guidelines.

Motion: Mary Ann Rosa seconded by Robert Retallick: I make a motion that the following be the guidelines that we will then refer to the Town Attorney for review and approval.

1. That the Chairman and or council member acting as Chairman shall have control over the conduct of the meeting.
2. That all comments by members of the public or council members and or staff should be made through the Chair.

3. That the Chairman has the discretion to stop a speaker or a council member if the speaker is being repetitive or becomes confrontational.
4. There will be a five-minute time limit per speaker, per meeting and it would be called public comment.
5. The Chairman reserves the right to ask any individual of the public to leave if they prove disruptive of the process.
6. No comments will be allowed relative to any personnel issue.

Denise Russ stated we had a new resident speaking she did not know there was a 5-minute time limit. Is there any way when people at Public Participation start that it is could be stated there is a 5-minute time limit.

Chair Jonathan Ramsay answered we would be putting something together for what we will be said at the beginning of each meeting. My guess it will be a summary of the rules going forward.

Gary Lafferty stated we have a clock back there we can see, there should be a clock up here so people know the 5 minutes are up.

Robert Desena stated I believe what occurred in the past ten minutes is a good example of why we should go forth with this regarding Public Participation. It should be Public Participation, it should not be confrontational and it should not be speaking of personal matters. The is a good example of structured guidelines and to follow them.

Vice Chair Mary Ann Rosa stated when we have a disruptive person, they should be removed from the room for appropriate action that needs to be taken. Tonight, was very upsetting to us as well as to the Town Manager. I would like to see the Town Manager talk to the Police Department about having someone here on a regular basis.

Motion passed unanimously

- b. Consider a resolution setting the mill rate to levy taxes for Fiscal Year 2023-2024.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, on May 23, 2023 the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 budget was approved by referendum vote, and;

WHEREAS, the mill rate must be established to levy the taxes on personal property and real estate.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the mill rate for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 be 36.86 due and payable on July 1, 2023 for personal property taxes and the first installment of real estate taxes due on July 1, 2023 and the second installment on real estate taxes due on January 1, 2024.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the mill rate for motor vehicle taxes due and payable on July 1, 2023 and the supplemental motor vehicle taxes due and payable on January 1, 2024 will be set at the mill rate cap set by the State of Connecticut per State Statute 12-71(e), currently 32.46.

Dated at Watertown, Connecticut this 5th day of June, 2023

Jonathan Ramsay, Chair
Watertown Town Council

Motion: Mary Ann Rosa seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to approve the resolution setting the mill rate to levy taxes for Fiscal Year 2023-2024.

Said resolution states that the mill rate for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 will be 36.86 due and payable on July 1, 2023 for personal property taxes and the first installment of real estate taxes due on July 1, 2023 and the second installment on real estate taxes due on January 1, 2024.

And, that the mill rate for motor vehicle taxes due and payable on July 1, 2023 and the supplemental motor vehicle taxes due and payable on January 1, 2024 will be set at the mill rate cap set by the State of Connecticut per State Statute 12-71(e), currently 32.46.

Discussion: none.

Motion passed unanimously

- c. Consider an appropriation from the General Fund in the amount of \$12,979.33 for unemployment payments made on behalf of the Board of Education. Funds have been reimbursed by the Board of Education.

Motion: Mary Ann Rosa seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to approve an appropriation from the General Fund in the amount of 12,979.33 for unemployment payments made on behalf of the Board of Education.

Denise Russ asked for an explanation on the motion on what funds are being reimbursed?

Susan Zappone, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director answered the request I made was due to a new format that now unemployment is having us pay the bill, it is on-line for the money to be wired. We wire the funds to them and it's considered an expenditure on our side but they reimburse us the money and we deposit it. We are just asking to have the money reappropriated into the line item that we spent if from.

Motion passed unanimously

- d. Consider setting a Special Town Meeting date to appropriate \$3,900,000 of American Rescue Plan Act funds for the purposes of:
1. Purchase of 686 Main Street, Watertown, CT
 2. Main Street Sidewalk/Safety Project.
 3. Design and engineering of a master plan for Oakville and Watertown

Motion: Mary Ann Rosa seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to set a Special Town Meeting to be held on June 19, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. to consider the appropriation of \$3,900,000 of the American Rescue Plan Act funds for the purpose of the Main Street Sidewalk Safety Improvement Project, the design and engineering of a master plan for Oakville and Watertown and the purchased property.

Chair Jonathan Ramsay stated just to confirm 3.9 million is the remainder of the funds.

Mark Raimo, Town Manager answered that is correct 3.9 million dollars is left of the funds. We just recently appropriated 1.5 million dollars toward the paving projects. I have been getting some emails regarding the bill that the president just signed regarding federal debt and they are going back after some of these funds they have not been appropriated. I think it is imperative for us to appropriate our funds so that we have a direction to use those funds. We will still be looking at purchasing the property on Main Street in Watertown for parking. We would have to do some type of design and engineering of a master plan and that would include the Watertown/Oakville corridor to make sure we stay consistent. I would think it would be prudent for us to put together a committee so that we could have representatives throughout the town to sit on that committee and take part in that master plan. The remaining funds we would again put into that whole plan of redoing sidewalks and safety measures throughout that corridor.

Motion passed unanimously

- e. Consider a resolution authorizing an appropriation of \$1,913 for tax refunds.

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 who 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 \$1,913 to line item 010-50341-043-0102 from the General Fund for tax refunds.

Dated at Watertown, Connecticut this 5th day of June, 2023.

Jonathan Ramsay, Chairman
Watertown Town Council

Motion: Mary Ann Rosa seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to approve the resolution authorizing an appropriation of \$1,913 for tax refunds.

Discussion: none.

Motion passed unanimously

- f. 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 5th day of June, 2023.

Jonathan Ramsay, Chairman
Watertown Town Council

Motion: Mary Ann Rosa seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to approve the resolution authorizing tax refunds.

Discussion: none.

Motion passed unanimously

Added to agenda

Special Town Meeting to consider an appropriation in the amount of \$2,707,066 to the Board of Education for Fiscal Year 2023.

Motion: Mary Ann Rosa seconded by Ken Demirs: I move to set a Special Town Meeting to be held on June 19, 2023 6:30 p.m. to consider an appropriation in the amount of \$2,707,066 to the Board of Education General Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2023.

Discussion: none.

Motion passed unanimously

10. Executive Session Time in 7:31 p.m.

Motion: Mary Ann Rosa seconded by Robert Retallick: I move that the Town Council members present enter into executive session along with the Town Attorney Paul Jessell and the Town Manager Mark Raimo for the purpose of discussing pending litigation in the matter of the City of Waterbury vs. Town of Watertown.

Discussion: none.

Motion passed unanimously

Mark Raimo, Town Manager asked to invite David McMahon our new Water & Sewer Assistant Superintendent in the meeting.

Motion: Jonathan Ramsay seconded Robert Retallick: so moved.

Motion passed unanimously

- a. Pending Litigation – City of Waterbury of vs. Town of Watertown.

Return to Regular Session 7:55 p.m.

11. New Business, Continued.

- g. Consider setting a special town meeting date to authorize an appropriation of \$50,000 from the Water Capital Fund and \$50,000 Sewer Capital Fund for Legal Services for the Water and Sewer Authority.

Motion: Mary Ann Rosa seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to set a special town meeting to be held on June 19 at 6:45 p.m. to consider the appropriation of \$100,000, \$50,000 from the Water Capital Fund and \$50,000 from the Sewer Capital Fund for legal services for the Water and Sewer Authority.

Discussion: none.

Motion passed unanimously

12. Adjournment

Motion: Mary Ann Rosa seconded by Robert Retallick: to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 7:56 p.m.

Motion passed unanimously

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Ramsay, Chair
Watertown Town Council

Approved: _____
Susan King, Clerk

Bill	Name	Address	City/State/Zip	Prop Loc/Vehicle Info.	Reason	Tax	Int	Fees	Refund
2019-03-0063736	MCHALE MICHAEL J	295 DAVIS ST	OAKVILLE, CT 06779-2332	2005/JH4KB16565C013416	Sec. 12-126 Tangible Personal Property Asse	99.90	-	-	99.90
2020-03-0060820	KRASHNIQI HASHIM	504 SAYBROOK RD	HADDAM, CT 06438	2017/1VWAI7A36HC018717	Sec. 12-126 Tangible Personal Property Asse	196.69	67.73	5.00	269.42
2020-03-0063241	MICHAEL MICHAEL J	295 DAVIS ST	OAKVILLE, CT 06779-2332	2005/JH4KB16565C013416	Sec. 12-126 Tangible Personal Property Asse	104.03	-	-	104.03
2021-03-0059537	HYUNDAI LEASE TITLING TRUST	ATTN PROP TAX RFDS	IRVINE, CA 92612	2018/KM8J3CA22JU644439	Sec. 12-129 Refund of Excess Payments - AC	648.23	-	-	648.23
2021-03-0059568	HYUNDAI LEASE TITLING TRUST	ATTN PROP TAX RFDS	IRVINE, CA 92612	2018/KM8J3CA47JU822699	Sec. 12-129 Refund of Excess Payments - AC	380.50	-	-	380.50
2021-03-0059572	HYUNDAI LEASE TITLING TRUST	ATTN PROP TAX RFDS	IRVINE, CA 92612	2019/XYPGDA32KG529618	Sec. 12-129 Refund of Excess Payments - AC	394.49	-	-	394.49
2021-03-0066359	RAGONESE ALLYSON M	3862 LANCASTER CT A101	PALM HARBOR, FL 34585-4110	2015/3N1AB7AP8FY375557	Sec. 12-129 Refund of Excess Payments - AC	15.97	-	-	15.97
TOTAL						1,839.81	67.73	5.00	1,912.54