

MINUTES

**WATERTOWN TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
JUNE 19, 2023
WATERTOWN TOWN HALL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
61 ECHO LAKE ROAD
WATERTOWN, CT 06795**

A Special Town Meeting was held at Watertown Town Hall, Council Chambers, on Monday, June 19, 2023. Jonathan Ramsay called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Jonathan Ramsay read the legal notice.



**WARNING AND NOTICE
TOWN OF WATERTOWN, CONNECTICUT
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
June 19, 2023**

The legal voters of the Town of Watertown and those entitled to vote in Town Meeting are hereby WARNED AND NOTIFIED of 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 purposes of the purchase of 686 Main Street, the Main Street Sidewalk Safety Improvement Project and for the design and engineering of a master plan for Oakville and Watertown.

A link to view the special town meeting will be posted on the Town of Watertown website www.watertownct.org by 4:00 p.m. on the date of the meeting.

Anyone wishing to vote at the Special Town Meeting must attend in person. Anyone wishing to provide comments for the meeting may do so by emailing towncouncil@watertownct.org or by mail to Watertown Town Council, 61 Echo Lake Rd., Watertown, CT 06795 and must be received by 2:00 p.m. June 19, 2023.

If you require a translator, or accommodations for a hearing impairment or other accommodation, contact the Town of Watertown at 860-945-5255.

Dated at Watertown, Connecticut this 8th day of June, 2023.

Mark A. Raimo, Town Manager

Jonathan Ramsay asked for nominations for town meeting moderator.

MOTION: Mary Ann Rosa I move to nominate Jonathan Ramsay as the meeting moderator.

Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations?

Seeing none.

All in favor of Jonathan Ramsay as Moderator of the meeting.

Motion passed unanimously

Jonathan Ramsay asked for nominations for clerk of the meeting.

MOTION: Mary Ann Rosa I move to nominate Susan King as Clerk as clerk of town meeting.

Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations?

Seeing none.

All in favor of Susan King being Clerk of the meeting.

Motion passed unanimously

MOTION: Mary Ann Rosa seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to authorize an appropriation in the amount of \$3,900,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act funds for the purposes of the purchase of 686 Main Street, the Main Street Sidewalk Safety Improvement Project and for the design and engineering of a master plan for Oakville and Watertown.

Mark Raimo, Town Manager stated just as a reminder the Town of Watertown received 6.4 million dollars in ARPA funds in the year 20/21. We received two payments of 3.2 million dollars in those two years. The remaining funds of 3. million dollars we had a placed a place holder for the Road Safety Audit on Main Street. The ARPA committee had recommended to the Town Council that 1.5 million dollars to purchase and develop property on Main Street in Watertown. One point 4 million dollars to improve sidewalks for safety and 1 million dollars in contingencies. At that point the Town Council had tasked me with coming up with a plan to

expense these monies. I do have a plan and I would like to propose that tonight for the council to appropriate the 3.9 million dollars and it's broken up into 3 buckets. The 3.9 million dollars I would suggest that we combine with the 3 million dollars grant that we received from Johanna Hayes. The first bucket of 3.9 million dollars is 1 million dollars that we originally had discussed about putting together for contingencies. For that 3-million-dollar grant that we received from Johanna Hayes there was a 20 percent match. I am suggesting that we take that 1 million dollars and invest it in a master plan for Watertown and Oakville, that would put a plan together, looking at the improvement of the types of sidewalks, lighting and safety measures. I would suggest as we move forward the council appoint a committee that would sit with a combination of past committees, so that we can actually get this master plan approved and we could bite off chunks of it to improve the main street safety including Watertown and Oakville. The second I am asking to committee the 1.4 million to the overall project. Which would be paired with that 3 million grant we received that would go into the actual work of the project and then the additional 1.5 million dollars I am asking for the appropriation to purchase 686 Main Street. Unfortunately, I do not have a commitment for this purchase but I am asking for an allocation for this money. To sit on hold until we can either get a deal or not get a deal. I apologize we don't have a deal it is a very complicated deal. I am dealing with two landlords, a property owner, 2 additional business owners, and is a complicated process that we have been going through. We are at the end and the reason why I am asking for the commitment by the council to commit this money. Is that it was a good faith on our part that we are serious about the purchase of this property and if we can make an agreement with the owner of the property, I would then take this agreement back to the council for your review and approval of the purchase. Even though we are allocating the money it would sit until the council approves this purchase. If we cannot make a deal then we take that money and appropriate back into the project or we can actually appropriate in another piece of property found suitable for developing parking. Another reason why I thought it was imperative that we move this money forward, with the recent agreement by congress in passing for our federal budget, there was a claw back provision that was talked about. What congress is looking at is to claw back the money that was not expensed through municipalities through the ARPA funds. By us allocating these funds for a use, it gives us far better protection to keep the funds in our possession to use for the plan that put in place.

Hearing no comments from the public and the council.

BY VOICE VOTE THE MODERATOR DECLARED THE MOTION PASSED

Meeting Adjournment at 6:37 p.m.

Town Council
Special Town Meeting
June 19, 2023
Page 4

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Ramsay, Moderator

Approved: _____
Susan King, Clerk