Rabert J. Coack

TOWN COUNCIL MAJORITY OFFICE

2020 JAN 16 A 8: 56

FEES COMMITTEE

TOWN CLERK EAST HARTFORD

JANUARY 14, 2020

PRESENT

Connor Martin, Temporary Chair, Councillors Awet Tsegai and Patricia

Harmon

ALSO

PRESENT

Marcia A. Leclerc, Mayor

Tom Baptist, Interim Public Works Director

Rich Kehoe, Town Council Chair

Lionel Lessard, D'Esopo Funeral Home

CALL TO ORDER

Temporary Chair Martin called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

NOMINATION OF OFFICERS

<u>Chair</u>

MOTION

By Awet Tsegai

seconded by Pat Harmon

to appoint Connor Martin as Chair

of the Fees Committee. Motion carried 3/0.

Secretary

MOTION

By Pat Harmon

seconded by Connor Martin

to appoint Awet Tsegai as Secretary

of the Fees Committee. Motion carried 3/0.

ADOPTION OF RULES GOVERNING MEETINGS

MOTION

By Awet Tsegai

seconded by Pat Harmon

to adopt Robert's Rules of Order as the rules that shall govern

parliamentary procedure at all subcommittee meetings, with the exception

that (1) the Chair shall not be required to restate the motion of any Council member unless requested by another Councillor, or when in the discretion of the Chair, such restatement is necessary to avoid any confusion as to the motion; and (2) where such rules are in conflict with

the provisions of the State Statutes, the Town Charter, or Town Ordinances.

Motion carried 3/0.

ESTABLISHMENT OF MEETING DATES

MOTION

By Awet Tsegai

seconded by Pat Harmon

to hold meetings at the call of the Chair.

Motion carried 3/0.

STORAGE OF RECORDS

MOTION

By Awet Tsegai

seconded by Pat Harmon

to store records in the Town Council office.

Motion carried 3/0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

August 8, 2019

MOTION

By Awet Tsegai

seconded by Pat Harmon

to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2019 meeting.

Motion carried 3/0.

OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO SPEAK

None

NEW BUSINESS

Cemetery Services Fees

<u>Chair Martin</u> turned the discussion over to <u>Mayor Leclerc</u> so she could provide some background information to the Committee. The Mayor distributed a chart entitled "East Hartford Cemeteries Fee Study" which contained the fees that the town is currently charging for plots, grave openings, disinterments and other services. (copy attached to

these minutes) Also included in this chart are the fees charged by surrounding towns that operate municipal cemeteries – West Hartford, Manchester, Newington, East Windsor, Vernon and Enfield – as well as two cemeteries that are not municipally operated - Cedar Hill, which is private, and St. Mary's, which is Catholic. It was clear to the Committee that East Harford's fees were well below the average and, in many instances, not enough to cover the expenses needed to perform the particular service. In other words, the town is operating at a loss with the current cemetery fees schedule. The Mayor indicated that the proposed increases, if implemented, could create a revenue stream of approximately \$140,000.00. The Mayor also told the Committee that a new software program is needed to better monitor the process of burials.

Lionel Lessard, a member of the Cemetery Advisory Board, and 40+ years funeral home businessman, addressed the Committee on the gradual increases over the last few years to the costs of maintaining cemeteries. He also told the Committee that the State Veterans Cemetery in Middletown, a state-operated facility, is dedicated to the burial of veterans and their spouses free of charge.

Tom Baptist, interim Public Works Director, told the Committee that of the 5 cemeteries in East Hartford, only one is active - Silver Lane Cemetery.

MOTION

By Awet Tsegai

seconded by Pat Harmon

to recommend that the Town Council approve (1) the increases in the cemetery services fees charged by the Town as presented by the Administration and as outline in a report from Mayor Marcia A. Leclerc. dated January 10, 2020 effective March 1, 2020; and (2) a 2% increase.

effective March 1, 2021 and annually thereafter.

Motion carried 3/0.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

By Awet Tsegai

seconded by Pat Harmon to adjourn (6:45 p.m.). Motion carried 3/0.

cc: Town Council Mayor Leclerc Tom Baptist, Interim Public Works Director Cemetery Advisory Board