

## EAST HARTFORD TOWN COUNCIL

### COMMUNITY CULTURAL CENTER AUDITORIUM

January 17, 2023

**PRESENT** Chair Richard F. Kehoe, Vice Chair Donald Bell, Jr., Majority Leader Sebrina Wilson, Minority Leader John Morrison, Councillors Angela Parkinson, Awet Tsegai, Travis Simpson, Thomas Rup and Harry Amadasun, Jr.

**ABSENT**

**ALSO PRESENT** Mayor Michael P. Walsh  
Connor Martin, Chief of Staff (via Teams)  
Melissa McCaw, Finance Director  
Kevin Munson, Fire Chief  
Laurence Burnsed, Director of Health and Human Services (via Teams)  
Eileen Buckheit, Director of Development (via Teams)  
Marilynn Cruz-Aponte, Director of Public Works (via Teams)  
Amy Peltier, Director, EH Works!

#### CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kehoe called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm. The Chair stated that this meeting was also available to the public through the “Teams” platform.

The Chair then announced the exit locations in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes §29-381, after which the Council joined him in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Chair asked for a moment of silence to recognize the passing of Vincent Parys, long time resident who worked for the town as a carpenter and served on the Veterans Commission.

#### AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

#### RECOGNITIONS AND AWARDS

#### OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL ON AGENDA ITEMS

##### Mayor Walsh

- wished all a good evening
- announced that all Town Hall Departments have relocated to their temporary locations at the Community Cultural Center as of January 9<sup>th</sup>. The Town Clerk’s Office is located in a temporary building in front of Town Hall at 740 Main Street.
- As of January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023 the Town of East Hartford has acquired the Church Corners Inn located at 860 Main Street. Approximately 30 tenants will be relocated and administration is developing a request for proposal to renovate the property.
- National Development has begun adding dirt at the Rentschler Field site to increase the elevation as one of the first steps of construction.

- Friday is the last day for appeal on the Silver Lane Plaza Eminent Domain claim. Pullman and Comley, LLC have assisted the town by filing a Certificate of Taking which the Mayor anticipates will take effect in the next few days.
- February 15, 2023 at 6:30 pm is tentatively scheduled for a “Town Hall” meeting detailing plans for projects in the coming year. The presentation will be held in the CCC Auditorium and residents are encouraged to attend.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

### January 3, 2023 Public Hearing

MOTION        By Sebrina Wilson  
                         seconded by John Morrison

to **approve** the minutes of the January 3, 2023 Public Hearing.

Motion carried 9/0

### January 3, 2023 Regular Meeting

MOTION        By Sebrina Wilson  
                         seconded by Travis Simpson

to **approve** the minutes of the January 3, 2023 Regular Meeting.

Motion carried 9/0

## COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

### Bulky Waste, Transfer Station and Recycling Report from Department of Public Works

The Chair introduced Marilynn Cruz-Aponte, Director of Public Works who provided an update on new solid waste initiatives implemented by the department.

On July 1, 2022 All American Waste was contracted to handle bulky waste and curbside solid waste collection services to residents. The procedure for bulky waste pick up was changed to eliminate the several weeks in which bulky waste such as sofas, bedding and other items were left on the curb. Reports of such waste are reported to the town and American Waste picks them up. Property owners are notified that the waste was in violation of town ordinances and that one of the two free bulky waste pickups has been charged to the property owner. Bulky collection pick-ups nearly tripled July-December 2023 vs. the two previous annual periods and the number of unscheduled bulky waste pickups has been significantly reduced. The Director stated that communications to encourage residents to schedule pickups have proven effective.

On October 1, 2022, the Transfer Station’s new pay-at-the-gate system took effect with an updated fee structure and allowance of credit/debit card and checks as forms of payment to replace ticket permits. The pattern of use remains similar and the Director stated that the program has provided an opportunity to repurpose administrative staff to other projects.

DPW has also initiated curbside recycling cart inspections as of February 2022. Led by Solid Waste Official Cesar Zapata, a marketing campaign was created to educate the public on proper recycling practices. The Director shared examples of door-tags and other communications and feels the program has been very successful. An enforcement process for those who fail to comply will be developed in the near future.

#### Annual Energy Use Summary from Bay State Consultants

Mayor Walsh stated that in 2016 the Town entered into a 7-year fixed-rate contract through private contractor TC Energy that remains effective through December 2023. Comparing the contracted rate to Eversource's current standard rate has yielded an estimated savings of roughly \$775,000 to the town for the 2022 calendar year. The Mayor stated that it is unlikely to expect a similar savings once the contract ends as rates have increased over time.

#### Resignation from Boards and Commissions

The Chair shared that Brennden Colbert has resigned from the Economic Development Commission due to health reasons, with the goal of returning to serve on the commission once his situation improves. The Chair expressed appreciation on behalf of the Council for Mr. Colbert's service and wished him a speedy recovery.

#### OLD BUSINESS

#### NEW BUSINESS

#### Approval of Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the Town of East Hartford and Local 1548 International Association of Fire Fighters, AFL-CIO

MOTION        By Awet Tsegai  
                     seconded by Tom Rup

to **approve** the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the Town of East Hartford and Local 1548 International Association of Fire Fighters, AFL-CIO effective July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2026 as outlined and attached to a memo dated January 10, 2023 from Michael P. Walsh, Mayor to Rich Kehoe, Town Council Chair and as ratified by the bargaining unit members on January 4, 2023.

Motion carried 9/0

#### Contingency Transfer

MOTION        By Awet Tsegai  
                     seconded by Tom Rup

to **transfer** \$298,508 from Account #G9600-60201, "Contingency Reserve Contract Negotiations," and \$9,825 from Account G9600-63492, "Contingency Reserve- General"

to Account #G5137-60110, "Permanent Services- Fire Suppression;" such transfer to provide a source of funds for the recently settled Fire Fighters Contract.

Motion carried 9/0

Tax Policy Committee- Council Acting as Committee of the Whole Re: Tax Incentive for National Development Project at Rentschler Field

MOTION        By Angie Parkinson  
                     seconded by Tom Rup

to adopt the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**, Rentschler WD West LLC, a Delaware limited liability company, has proposed building an approximately 1.3 million square foot warehouse building to be located at Map/Lot 33-7, 695 East Harford Boulevard North, in the Town of East Hartford, Connecticut and Map/Lot 33-8, 501 East Hartford Boulevard North, East Hartford, Connecticut (hereinafter the "Project"); and

**WHEREAS**, the Project is located within the Rentschler Field Enterprise Zone; and

**WHEREAS**, the construction of the Project will generate an interim assessment to the October 1, 2023 Grand List, prior to the commencement of the Enterprise Zone tax abatement; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed cost of the Project is in excess of Forty Million Dollars (\$40,000,000.00) in the aggregate; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town will benefit from the development of the Project, the prospect of new jobs for the area and increased personal property taxes; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town's goals are to preserve and create jobs, create a stable long-term tax base and encourage the growth of new and existing businesses; and

**WHEREAS**, Connecticut General Statutes Section 12-65b, as amended, provides the legal authority for a municipality to enter into this tax assessment agreement for the October 1, 2023 Grand List interim assessment; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town and Rentschler WD West LLC, intend to enter into two Tax Modification Agreements, drafts of which have been provided to the Town Council (the "Tax Agreements"), to modify the assessment attributable to the project on the October 1, 2023 Grand list year by:

1. reducing the assessed value of land at Map/Lot 33-8 by an amount equal to 2.84% of the 2023 Grand List Year assessed value. For purposes of this agreement the "Baseline Assessment" shall be the assessed value of land at Map/Lot 33-8 as assessed for the real property tax purposes on the October 1, 2022 Grand List, which assessed value is \$8,879,190 per the East Hartford Assessor: (i) The first payment of taxes due on the October 1, 2023 Grand List with respect to the "Baseline Assessment" shall be due and payable on July 1, 2024; and (ii) The remainder of the

2. reducing the assessed value of land at Map/Lot 33-7 by an amount equal to 2.84% of the 2023 Grand List Year assessed value. For purposes of this agreement the “Baseline Assessment” shall be the assessed value of land at Map/Lot 33-7 as assessed for the real property tax purposes on the October 1, 2022 Grand List, which assessed value is \$6,295,500 per the East Hartford Assessor: (i) The first payment of taxes due on the October 1, 2023 Grand List with respect to the “Baseline Assessment” shall be due and payable on July 1, 2024; and (ii) The remainder of the tax bill due on the October 1, 2023 Grand List shall be due and payable in full no later than January 31, 2025.

**RESOLVED:** That the two Tax Agreements, substantially in the form as presented to this meeting and made a part hereof as fully as if set forth herein, with such changes, omissions, insertions and revisions as any Corporation Counsel of the Town shall deem advisable, are hereby approved; and Michael P. Walsh, Mayor, in the name of the Town, is hereby authorized to execute said Tax Agreement.

*On call of the vote, the motion carried 9/0*

## Narcotic Electronic Storage Vault

that in accordance with Section 10-7(c) of the Town of East Hartford Code of Ordinances, the Town Council **waive** the bidding procedures required by Section 10-7(b) and allow the Fire Department to purchase 10 Knox Med Vaults as part of the Department's Electronic Storage System for \$18,260 from CDBG-CV funds as detailed in a memo from Kevin Munson, Fire Chief to Mayor Michael P. Walsh on December 30, 2022.

## Replenishment Station

that in accordance with Section 10-7(c) of the Town of East Hartford Code of Ordinances, the Town Council **waive** the bidding procedures required by

Motion carried 9/0

Motion carried 9/0



Motion carried 9/0

Motion carried 9/0

Motion carried 9/0

Motion carried 9/0



with access information posted on the agenda, and the start time for each workshop shall be as follows:

## **FY 2023-24 Revised Budget Workshop Calendar**

### **COMMUNITY CULTURAL CENTER**

#### **Monday, February 27, 2023**

**6:30 p.m.**

#### **Mayor's Summary of Budget**

Town Treasurer  
Town Council  
Town Clerk  
Registrars of Voters  
Selectmen  
Probate Court  
Corporation Counsel

#### **Public Works**

Administration  
Engineering  
Highway Services  
Flood Protection  
Waste Services  
Fleet Services  
Building Maintenance  
Metropolitan District Commission  
Park Maintenance  
Public Works Capital Improvements  
Library

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#### **Wednesday, March 1, 2023**

**6:30 p.m.**

#### **Board of Education**

Superintendent of Schools

#### **Police Department**

Police Administration  
Operations  
Criminal Investigation  
Police Capital Improvements

#### **Public Safety Complex**

Public Safety Communications

#### **Fire Department**

Administration  
Suppression  
Fire Training  
Fire Marshal  
Apparatus Maintenance  
Alarm Maintenance  
Emergency Medical Service

Emergency Management  
Fire Capital Improvements

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**Saturday, March 4, 2023**

**8:30 am**

**Boards and Commissions**

Beautification Commission  
Inland/ Wetlands/Environment Commission  
Personnel Board of Appeals  
Emergency Medical Services  
Zoning Board of Appeals  
Board of Ethics  
Commission on Aging  
Services for Persons w/Disabilities

Veterans Commission  
Board of Assessment Appeals  
Historic District Commission  
Commission on Culture & Fine Arts  
Public Building Commission  
Pension & Retiree Benefit Board  
The Hockanum River Commission Commission on

**Development**

Administration  
Redevelopment Agency  
Economic Development Commission  
Planning & Zoning Commission  
Grants Administration  
Inspections and Permits  
East Hartford Works!

**Lunch Break 12:30 p.m.**

**Executive**

Office of the Mayor  
Human Resources  
Public Library

**Information Technology**

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**Monday, March 6, 2023**

**6:30 p.m.**

**Health and Social Services**

Administration  
Community Health & Nursing Services  
Environmental Control  
Social Services

**Parks and Recreation**

Administration  
Other Facilities  
Senior Services  
Park Special Program  
Parks & Recreation Capital Improvements  
Services for Seniors  
Youth Services

**Finance**

Administration

Accounts and Control  
Purchasing  
Assessor  
Revenue and Collections  
Employee Benefits  
Risk Management  
Debt Services  
Contingency  
Capital Improvements  
Revenues

Motion carried 9/0

#### Appointments/Reappointments: Boards and Commissions

MOTION By Harry Amadasun  
seconded by Tom Rup

to **approve** the following:

##### Appointments

##### **Zoning Board of Appeals**

- D — Erwin Hurst — 118 Oxford Drive — term to expire 12/23
- D — Daron Ross — 2 Outlook Street — term to expire 12/23

##### **Beautification Commission**

- D — Time Larson — 33 Gorman Place — term to expire 12/24

##### Re-Appointments

##### **Commission on Aging**

- R — Anita Morrison — 34 Jonathan Lane — term to expire 12/24

##### **Economic Development Commission**

- R — Anita Morrison — 34 Jonathan Lane — term to expire 12/24

Motion carried 9/0

#### OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCILLORS TO DIRECT QUESTIONS TO THE ADMINISTRATION

Councillor Tsegai requested an update on the Jasko, LLC development project at the former Showcase Cinema site on Silver Lane. *The Mayor stated that changes in financial economy since the project was approved by the Council have caused delay and affected the project. Jasko are proposing plans that downsize the number of apartments from 476 to a number under 400 units. A meeting is planned between the Town and the developers to discuss the request. The Mayor expects to refer to the Council a modified tax agreement based on the changes and potentially reengaging with the Planning and Zoning Commission to approve changes.*

Councillor Tsegai also made note of a lack of lighting on Roberts Street heading towards Forbes Street. *The Mayor stated he will look into the issue.*

Councillor Simpson made note that the basketball court located directly behind the auditorium at the CCC was in use during a recent Planning and Zoning meeting, causing a noise issue. *Eileen Buckheit, Development Director stated that there was a practice involving the Special Olympics*

group that ended just before the meeting began. The issue will be addressed to assure the court is not in use during meetings going forward.

Councillor Simpson also requested clarification regarding live viewing options for meetings held at the Community Cultural Center. *Chair Kehoe stated that due to the relocation to the Cultural Center, the only current option for watching meetings live is via Teams or in person. The goal is to provide live broadcasts from the auditorium as soon as possible and discussions with Channel 5 are ongoing.*

COUNCIL ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION MATTERS

## OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO SPEAK

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION By John Morrison  
seconded by Don Bell  
to **adjourn** (9:52 pm)

Motion carried 9/0

The Chair wished all a good evening and announced that the next regular meeting of the Town Council would be on February 7, 2023.

Attest \_\_\_\_\_  
Jason Marshall  
TOWN COUNCIL CLERK