

EAST HARTFORD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMUNITY CULTURAL CENTER AUDITORIUM

February 7, 2023

PRESENT Chair Richard F. Kehoe, Vice Chair Donald Bell, Jr. (arrived 8:03 pm), 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
Marilynn Cruz-Aponte, Director of Public Works
Tom Baptist, Public Works Project Manager
Eileen Buckheit, Director of Development (via Teams)
Robert Fitzgerald, Assistant Corporation Counsel
Douglas Wilson, Town Engineer

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kehoe called the meeting to order at 7:44 pm. The Chair stated that this meeting was also available to the public through the "Teams" platform.

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

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

RECOGNITIONS AND AWARDS

OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL ON AGENDA ITEMS

Tom Russo, 70 Sisson Street, spoke to encourage the Council to consider improvements to Department of Public Works facilities.

Gary McKeon, 99 Appletree Drive, also feels improvements to DPW facilities are necessary.

Mayor Walsh

- wished all a good evening
- Relocation of residents at 860 Main Street (Church Corners Inn) is currently underway. On February 4th, the sprinkler system froze causing a blown water pipe at the building which flooded a number of areas of the building and damaged electrical and fire panels. Approximately 25-30 residents were relocated to the Econo Lodge, 490 Main Street. The building has been condemned temporarily pending an assessment on the reopening of the building.

- Eminent domain proceedings on Silver Lane Plaza are close to finalization pending an agreement with the state to clarify that its easement on the property is not subject to the taking..
- The Town currently maintains three private roads in East Hartford; Roberts Court, St. Regis Street and Rosenthal Street. He supports not taking Rosenthal Street until it is improved to town standards.
- Currently 77% of Town curbside bulky waste collection consists of single family homes. The remainder are primarily rental units of 6 units or less.
- National Development will be hosting a ribbon cutting on Rentschler Field on March 6th at 10:30 am. Construction work has begun on the site.
- Roberts Street will receive additional LED street lighting for safety purposes.
- Moody's Investors Service has maintained an Aa3 issuer rating to the Town of East Hartford which is good news in light of challenging economy.
- The Town Clerk's vault will be closed from Tuesday, February 14th and until Tuesday, February 21th. This may affect access to some vital and land records prior to 1960. The Town Clerk's office itself will remain open and operational during this period and will try to accommodate requests for access to such records during that time period.
- AARP Tax Assistance Program will be available to residents at the East Hartford Senior Center beginning Feb 7, 2023 and through April 14, 2023.
- All town offices, including the East Hartford Transfer Station, will be closed Monday, February 13, 2023 in observance of President Lincoln's Birthday and Monday, February 20, 2023 in observance of President Washington's Birthday. Curbside trash and recycling pick-up will run on schedule with NO delays.
- "Coffee with a Cop" will occur on Tuesday February 14th from 8-9 am at Dunkin' located at 639 Main Street. All are welcome.
- A virtual program "Galentine's Day Friendship Zine" is available through the East Hartford Library, Wednesday, February 15th at 6:30 pm
- "Threads of Assumption" will perform at the East Hartford Makerspace on Thursday, February 16th from 6-7:30 pm at Raymond Library
- A Percussion Workshop with Jocelyn Pleasant and Friends will occur Thursday February 16th at 7:00 pm at Raymond Library
- A Living History Program on Private William Webb, Soldier in the Connecticut 29th Regiment from Kevin Johnson will be held at Raymond Library on Thursday February 23rd at 4:00 pm
- A Town Hall Meeting is scheduled for Thursday February 16th from 6:30-8:30 pm in the CCC Auditorium. The Mayor will be presenting the 2023 Control Tower to the public.
- The East Hartford Health & Social Services is available to support residents and basic needs through the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP). This program is intended to expand the ongoing work of the department to provide shelter, food, and supportive services to individuals and families who are experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness and/or hunger.
- East Hartford Little League Spring 2023 Registration is open through February 19th at www.ehll.org.
- East Hartford Parks and Recreation is now hiring for summer program positions.
- Tax exemption programs that benefit the elderly, persons with disabilities, and veterans are available through the Assessor's page of www.easthartfordct.gov.
- The town is partnering with the YWCA to promote equitable representation on municipal boards and commissions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 17, 2023 Regular Meeting

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
seconded by Tom Rup

to **approve** the minutes of the January 17, 2023 Regular Meeting

Motion carried 8/0

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Presentation by Department of Public Works re: Facilities Improvement Plan

Marilynn Cruz-Aponte, Director of Public Works, presented an updated plan for improvements to the Public Works facilities located at Ecology Drive. Deficiencies identified include substandard bathroom and breakroom amenities, an unsafe fleet building, roofs that are at the end of their usable lives, non-compliance with OSHA requirements, and inadequate storage facilities.

The plan as presented at the September 20, 2022 Town Council Meeting has been amended to expand from 3-years to an 8-year sequence of prioritized projects at a revised estimated cost of \$36 million. The Director feels that the multi-year plan is responsive to the financial concerns of the Town while providing its employees a safe and healthy workplace, and enabling them to offer effective service to the residents, businesses, and visitors of East Hartford.

The Council acknowledged the needs of the department for facility upgrades and the importance of providing a quality work environment for employees while remaining sensitive to the financial requirements to make the proposed improvements.

Notice of Bid Approval: Custom Boat Trailer

The Chair shared that after review of the bid responses proposed for a Fire Department rescue boat trailer, the department rejected the lowest bidder, Connecticut Trailers Inc., and awarded the bid to the next lowest bidder, Loadmaster Trailer Company, LTD as their bid met the posted bid specifications more completely. Per ordinance, when this occurs an official notification for the public record is required.

Notice of Fund Balance Surplus: Transfer to Retiree Benefit Trust Fund

The Chair disclosed that as required by ordinance, if at the close of any fiscal year, the undesignated reserve fund for the town exceeds ten percent of the total budget appropriation for the year, the additional surplus shall be appropriated to the Retiree Benefit Trust Fund. Due to an excess in the 2022-23 fund balance, a transfer of \$2,213,000 will be processed in January and deposited into the OPEB Trust.

Resignation/s from Boards and Commissions

The Chair announced that Antonio Matta has resigned from the Public Building

Commission. The Council expressed their appreciation to Mr. Matta for his service to the community and encouraged residents to consider participating on one of the Town's various boards and commissions.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

Grant Application: Brownfields Funding for Church Corners Inn from Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG)

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by Travis Simpson

to **adopt** the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) has made funds available for the assessment and remediation of environmentally compromised properties, known as Brownfields; and

WHEREAS, detection and assessment of potential contaminants such as lead paint, asbestos and PCBs is an essential step in the redevelopment of the Church Corners Inn property.

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED; That Michael P. Walsh, Mayor of the Town of East Hartford, is authorized to make application to, and execute and approve on behalf of this corporation, any and all documents, contracts, and amendments as may be required by the CRCOG as they pertain to this Metrohartford Brownfields Assessment Program.

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

Waiver of Qualifications: Educational Requirements for Public Works Director Applicant

MOTION By Angie Parkinson
 seconded by Tom Rup

that the Town Council **waive** the Education Requirements as detailed in the job description for the position of Public Works Director for the purposes of hiring Alex M. Trujillo to the position as recommended in a memo from Mayor Michael P. Walsh to Council Chair Richard Kehoe on January 24, 2023

Motion carried 9/0

Mayor Walsh then introduced Mr. Trujillo to the Council and welcomed him to the East Hartford staff.

Bid Waiver: Westlaw Legal Research Service

MOTION By Don Bell
 seconded by Tom Rup

Motion carried 9/0

Personnel and Pensions Subcommittee meeting held on January 23, 2023.

Motion carried 9/0

Chief of Staff

MOTION By Don Bell
seconded by Tom Rup

to **approve** the revised Job Description for the position of “Chief of Staff” dated January 1, 2023 as amended by the Department of Human Resources and presented at the Personnel and Pensions Subcommittee meeting held on January 23, 2023.

Motion carried 9/0

Refund of Taxes

MOTION By Harry Amadasun
seconded by Awet Tsegai

to approve a total refund of taxes in the amount of \$8,386.29 pursuant to Section 12-129 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Motion carried 9/0

Bill	Name/ Check payable to:	Address	City/State/Zip	Prop Loc/Vehicle Info.	Int	Over Paid
2021-03-0053161	BENJAMIN MICHAEL M	156 LARRABEE ST	EAST HARTFORD, CT 06108-2736	2021/4T3B6RFV2MU036496	0	-369.24
2021-03-0054336	BROWN AUDREY A	86 LAFAYETTE AVE	EAST HARTFORD, CT 06118-2629	2013/JM1B11TG7D1740885	0	-48.27
2021-01-0008905	CHELSEA GROTON BANK ATT	PO BOX 869	GROTON, CT 06340	112 SHADYCREST DR	0	-1,019.00
2021-03-0074429	HANCOCK MANUFACTURING	247 BURNHAM ST	EAST HARTFORD, CT 06108-1131	2021/JF2GTAEC3M8288331	0	-205.95
2020-03-0064697	HERNANDEZ AIDALUZ G	51 RENE CT	EAST HARTFORD, CT 06108-1338	2005/1N4BA41E55C830590	0	-91.08
2021-03-0066160	HONDA LEASE TRUST	600 KELLY WAY	HOLYOKE, MA 01040-9681	2019/1HGCV1F58KA093453	0	-520.98
2021-03-0066279	HONDA LEASE TRUST	600 KELLY WAY	HOLYOKE, MA 01040-9681	2019/2HKRW6H35KH226001	0	-617.40
2021-03-0066748	HYUNDAI LEASE TITLING TRU	4100 WILDWOOD PARKWAY	ATLANTA, GA 30339	2019/5XXGT4L31KG304717	0	-249.94
2021-03-0067233	JANANGELO FRANK P 2ND	26 LARAIA AVE	EAST HARTFORD, CT 06108-2731	1999/1NXBR12E4XZ193832	0	-10.81
2020-03-0082898	SOTOMAYOR ORLANDO	35 WOODBRIDGE AVE	EAST HARTFORD, CT 06108	2002/4A3AA46G72E133709	0	-52.48
2020-04-0088688	SOTOMAYOR ORLANDO	35 WOODBRIDGE AVE	EAST HARTFORD, CT 06108	2000/2HKRL1856YH604798	-2.00	-22.50
2020-03-0084707	TOYOTA LEASE TRUST	3200 WEST RAY ROAD	CHANDLER, AZ 85226	2020/JTDP4RCE3LJ039050	0	-399.56
2021-03-0084552	TOYOTA LEASE TRUST	3200 WEST RAY ROAD	CHANDLER, AZ 85226	2020/JTDL9RFU2L3018150	0	-414.85
2021-03-0084556	TOYOTA LEASE TRUST	3200 WEST RAY ROAD	CHANDLER, AZ 85226	2018/2T3BFREVXJW806361	0	-193.17
2021-03-0084590	TOYOTA LEASE TRUST	3200 WEST RAY ROAD	CHANDLER, AZ 85226	2018/2T3BFREV2JW841720	0	-519.99
2021-03-0084591	TOYOTA LEASE TRUST	3200 WEST RAY ROAD	CHANDLER, AZ 85226	2018/JTMBFREVXJ250910	0	-483.20
2021-03-0084616	TOYOTA LEASE TRUST	3200 WEST RAY ROAD	CHANDLER, AZ 85226	2020/4T1K61BK8LU015155	0	-536.97
2021-03-0084622	TOYOTA LEASE TRUST	3200 WEST RAY ROAD	CHANDLER, AZ 85226	2018/5TDBZRFH5J5494578	0	-715.10
2021-03-0084633	TOYOTA LEASE TRUST	3200 WEST RAY ROAD	CHANDLER, AZ 85226	2018/JTMBFREV9J249750	0	-96.86
2021-03-0084635	TOYOTA LEASE TRUST	3200 WEST RAY ROAD	CHANDLER, AZ 85226	2019/2T3G1RFV3KC005664	0	-442.99
2021-03-0084651	TOYOTA LEASE TRUST	3200 WEST RAY ROAD	CHANDLER, AZ 85226	2019/4T1B11HK9KU715397	0	-327.58
2021-03-0084656	TOYOTA LEASE TRUST	3200 WEST RAY ROAD	CHANDLER, AZ 85226	2019/JTMF1RFV3KD502768	0	-110.92
2021-03-0084659	TOYOTA LEASE TRUST	3200 WEST RAY ROAD	CHANDLER, AZ 85226	2019/3TMCZ5AN4KM279608	0	-148.22
2021-03-0084660	TOYOTA LEASE TRUST	3200 WEST RAY ROAD	CHANDLER, AZ 85226	2019/5TDJZRFH8K5607730	0	-75.04
2021-03-0084665	TOYOTA LEASE TRUST	3200 WEST RAY ROAD	CHANDLER, AZ 85226	2020/JTDP4RCE3LJ039050	0	-582.34
2021-03-0084941	TU HUONG N	49 PARK AVE	EAST HARTFORD, CT 06108-4021	2015/WA1LFAFP0FA015665	0	-101.92
2019-03-0089573	WOOD FLORENCE C	79 REDWOOD LN	SOUTH GLASTONBURY, CT 06073-	2018/1C4BJWFG0JL850319	0	-16.13
2019-03-0089578	WOOD JOSHUA V	79 REDWOOD LN	SOUTH GLASTONBURY, CT 06073-	2014/3GCUKREC5EG231272	0	-11.80
SUBTOTAL					(2.00)	(8,384.29)
TOTAL						\$(8,386.29)

Bid Waiver: McAuliffe Park Railroad Crossing

MOTION By Harry Amadasun
 seconded by Don Bell

that the Town Council **waives** the bidding procedures required by Section 10-7(b) and allows the Town to partner with Connecticut Southern Railroad for design and construction services coordinated by Connecticut Southern Railroad for an at-grade pedestrian crossing over the railroad adjacent to McAuliffe Park.

Motion carried 9/0

OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCILLORS TO DIRECT QUESTIONS TO THE ADMINISTRATION

Councillor Simpson asked how long the administration anticipates residents from Church Corners Inn will need to be relocated. *The Mayor stated that an official date is difficult to provide given the condition of the building and needs of the residents.*

Councillor Amadasun asked if the Harm Reduction Alliance mobile support unit has been made available to the relocated residents. *The Mayor stated that the Town has partnered with InterCommunity Health Care and services have been offered.*

Councillor Tsegai thanked the administration for adding lighting fixtures to Roberts Street.

Councillor Simpson suggested that more options be provided for people with basic shelter and food needs.

Councillor Amadasun requested a report from the Health Department on the greater relocation strategy for the Church Corners residents.

COUNCIL ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION MATTERS

The pending workers' compensation claims of former Town employee, Christopher Moquin

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by John Morrison

to **accept** the recommendation of Corporation Counsel to fully and finally settle the pending workers' compensation claims of former Town employee, Christopher Moquin, for a total sum of \$31,750.00.

Motion carried 9/0

The pending assessment (tax) appeal known as INTERCOMMUNITY, INC. v. TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD – HHB-CV22-6155974-S

MOTION By Don Bell
 seconded by Tom Rup

to accept the recommendation of Corporation Counsel to settle the pending assessment (tax) appeal known as INTERCOMMUNITY, INC v. TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD, Docket Number HHB-CV22-6155974-S, involving real property located at 287 Main Street, East Hartford from the fair market value of \$2,005,860 to the fair market value of \$561,640 which shall generate a reduction of \$41,448.95 in property taxes, for the Grand List Year of 2021.

Motion carried 9/0

MOTION By Don Bell
seconded by John Morrison

to accept the recommendation of Corporation Counsel to settle the pending assessment (tax) appeal known as INTERCOMMUNITY, INC v. TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD, Docket Number HHB-CV22-6155974-S, involving real property located at 287 Main Street, East Hartford from the fair market value of \$2,005,860 to the fair market value of \$160,471.00 which shall generate a reduction of \$52,962.57 in property taxes, for the Grand List Year of 2022.

Motion carried 9/0

The pending assessment (tax) appeal known as EAST HARTFORD BUSINESS PARK v. TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD – HHB-CV22-6073434-S.

MOTION By Don Bell
seconded by John Morrison

to accept the recommendation of Corporation Counsel to settle the pending assessment (tax) appeal known as EAST HARTFORD BUSINESS PARK v. TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD, Docket Number HHB-CV22-6073434-S, involving real property located at 88 Long Hill Street, East Hartford from the fair market value of \$13,482,210.00 to the fair market value of \$12,942,915.00 which shall generate a reduction of \$15,478.00 in property taxes, for the Grand List Year of 2021.

Motion carried 9/0

MOTION By Don Bell
seconded by John Morrison

to accept the recommendation of Corporation Counsel to settle the pending assessment (tax) appeal known as EAST HARTFORD BUSINESS PARK v. TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD, Docket Number HHB-CV22-6073434-S, involving real property located at 1036 Tolland Street, East Hartford from the fair market value of \$69,114.00 to the fair market value of \$66,350.00 which shall generate a reduction of \$79.00 in property taxes, for the Grand List Year of 2021.

Motion carried 9/0

MOTION By Don Bell

seconded by John Morrison

to accept the recommendation of Corporation Counsel to settle the pending assessment (tax) appeal known as EAST HARTFORD BUSINESS PARK v. TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD, Docket Number HHB-CV22-6073434-S, involving real property located at 26 Long Hill Street, East Hartford from the fair market value of \$111,080.00 to the fair market value of \$106,630.00 which shall generate a reduction of \$128.00 in property taxes, for the Grand List Year of 2021.

Motion carried 9/0

MOTION By Don Bell
seconded by John Morrison

to accept the recommendation of Corporation Counsel to settle the pending assessment (tax) appeal known as EAST HARTFORD BUSINESS PARK v. TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD, Docket Number HHB-CV22-6073434-S, involving real property located at 54 Long Hill Street, East Hartford from the fair market value of \$129,280.00 to the fair market value of \$124,105.00 which shall generate a reduction of \$149.00 in property taxes, for the Grand List Year of 2021.

Motion carried 9/0

OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO SPEAK

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION By John Morrison
seconded by Don Bell
to **adjourn** (10:16 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 21, 2023.

Attest _____

Jason Marshall
TOWN COUNCIL CLERK