

## EAST HARTFORD TOWN COUNCIL

### TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS

September 20, 2022

**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 Walsh  
Connor Martin, Chief of Staff  
Eileen Buckheit, Director of Development  
Tom Baptist, Project Manager- Sustainability  
Melissa McCaw, Director of Finance  
Marilyn Cruz-Aponte, Director of Public Works  
Jeff Anderson, Vice President of Preconstruction, Downes Construction  
Mark Allyn, Senior Vice President, BVH Integrated Services  
Michael Dell'Accio, Project Manager, Downes Construction  
John Comeau, Architect, Weston and Sampson Engineers  
Paul O'Sullivan, Grants Manager  
Rich Gentile, Assistant Corporation Counsel  
Cephus Nolan, Director of Youth Services  
Ted Favel, Director of Parks and Recreation

#### CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kehoe called the meeting to order at 7:30 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

Mayor Walsh stated (1) wished all a good evening; (2) The Department of Public Works has distributed a mailing detailing revised transfer station and bulky waste curbside collection fees effective October 1, 2022; (3) East Hartford Commission on Culture and Fine Arts is hosting a silent movie night at the Community Center (50 Chapman Place) on Thursday, September 29<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm; (4) East Hartford Public Library has resumed Sunday hours from 1-5 p.m with a number of special events scheduled on the calendar; (5) An exhibit from painter Thomas McCabe is now on view through September 30<sup>th</sup> at the library; (6) Parks and Recreation has updated their registration management software. Residents will be required to create new user accounts; (7) The Believe 208 Run for the Brave and Finest 5K will occur on Sunday Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m. starting at the Knights of

Columbus (1831 Main Street); (8) National Coffee with a Cop Day will be celebrated Wednesday October 5<sup>th</sup> from 8-10 a.m. at Dunkin Donuts (639 Main Street); (9) Special Olympics Fall Bowling is occurring on Saturdays at Hall of Fame Silver Lanes (748 Silver Lane) through November 19<sup>th</sup>; (10) The annual Fall Festival will be held Saturday, October 8<sup>th</sup> at the Town Green (1047 Main Street) from 11 am to 3 pm; (11) The Dog Park at Foran Park is now open to the public.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

##### September 6, 2022 Executive Session

MOTION        By Sebrina Wilson  
                     seconded by Don Bell

to **approve** the minutes of the September 6, 2022 Executive Session.

Motion carried 9/0.

##### September 6, 2022 Regular Meeting

MOTION        By Sebrina Wilson  
                     seconded by Don Bell

to **approve** the minutes of the September 6, 2022 Regular Meeting.

Motion carried 9/0.

##### September 8, 2022 Special Meeting

MOTION        By Sebrina Wilson  
                     seconded by John Morrison

to **approve** the minutes of the September 8, 2022 Special Meeting.

Motion carried 9/0.

*To accommodate those present, the following motion was presented:*

MOTION        By Don Bell  
                     Seconded by Tom Rup

To take Item 8D, "Fees Committee- Council Acting as Committee of the Whole Re: Building and Fire Marshal Fees at East Hartford Logistics and Technology Park at Rentschler Field" out of order.

Motion carried 9/0.

##### Fees Committee- Council Acting as Committee of the Whole Re: Building and Fire Marshal Fees at East Hartford Logistics and Technology Park at Rentschler Field

MOTION        By Harry Amadasun

seconded by Travis Simpson

That the Town Council, acting as a Committee of the Whole for the Fees Committee **approve** the fixed fee schedule for the local building and fire department permit fees for the planned development of the East Hartford Logistics and Technology Park at Rentschler Field (“the Project”) in the amount of \$4,000,000 as presented in a memo from Eileen Buckheit, Development Director to Mayor Mike Walsh on September 15, 2022.

Motion carried 9/0.

## COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

### Town Hall Renovation Project Update

Marilyn Cruz-Aponte, Director of Public Works and Tom Baptist, Project Manager-Sustainability, presented a brief video detailing current conditions of Town Hall.

Mr. Baptist provided the results of a cost management analysis as provided by Downes Construction with a revised project budget based on the report’s recommendations. The total cost of the project is projected at \$21.6 Million, revised from the initial bid amount of \$23.3 Million. The savings has been generated by revising the required work on specific elements of the project. All items deemed by the project engineers as “absolutely necessary” components are still included, as well as the replacement of aged electrical wiring; the renovation of public bathrooms, strategic relocation of departments within Town Hall, and the permanent relocation of the Social Services Department to the Community Cultural Center. Items removed from the project include the replacement of the air handler, duct work and lighting in Town Council Chambers, the renovation of the staff kitchen and bathrooms in the basement. Additional savings is provided by value engineering of individual bids.

Jeff Anderson, Vice President of Preconstruction for Downes Construction and Mark Allyn, Senior Vice President of BVH Integrated Services and project engineer, discussed the potential risks and additional costs that could be incurred if the project is delayed further based on market projections.

The Council discussed the repercussions of moving forward with the Town Hall project vs. addressing other needs for the Town, specifically the issues at Public Works facilities that are to be presented later in the meeting. Director Cruz-Aponte confirmed that a full assessment of town facilities is in progress, with the goal of prioritizing needs. Such assessment will be presented to the Town Council at a subsequent meeting.

Mr. Baptist confirmed that recommended items removed from the project, such as the upgrades to Council Chambers could be addressed at a later date without an adverse effect on the rest of the building’s operations.

Melissa McCaw, Finance Director, stated that currently the Town has \$16.9 million in authorizations and allocations available for this project. This includes the remaining available funds of \$11.9 million from existing 2018 and 2020 bond authorizations for public building renovations and the current ARPA allocation of \$5 million. The Director provided a summary of proposed funding sources to support the revised total project cost

of \$21.6 million. The recommendation includes increasing the ARPA allocation to \$7.6 million, primarily leveraging the unallocated balance of \$1.8 million previously held for the North End Community Center renovation project that did not move forward and other smaller allocations. The Director has proposed additional funding of \$2 million from the Town's General Fund, with \$1.4 million pulled from current year excess municipal aid from the state. The remaining \$600,000 would come from the establishment of a capital reserve fund to be funded with \$200,000 annually from the general budget appropriation over the next three years.

#### Presentation by Department of Public Works Re: Facilities Conditions

Director Cruz-Aponte introduced John Comeau, Architect, Weston and Sampson Engineers who shared a presentation of the current work environment and conditions at the Public Works facility on Ecology Drive. Based on the findings of the report provided, a number of buildings at the facility are in disrepair and require immediate attention to be brought up to code. The Director is requesting action taken in phases, with short term projects to address substandard sanitary conditions and immediate employee safety concerns while more permanent accommodations and a plan for funding can be developed. These projects include the temporary lease of a more adequate facility to use as a Fleet Maintenance Shop and the rental of two modular buildings to serve as facilities for department employees.

The Council acknowledged the need to upgrade facilities to meet the concerns of staff and will consider the proposal. Councillors requested a comparison of the costs of purchasing rather than leasing modular bathroom facilities, combining town and board of education vehicle maintenance services and whether it is more cost effective to outsource maintenance services.

#### OLD BUSINESS

#### NEW BUSINESS

#### Purchase and Sale Agreement Re: 860 Main Street "Church Corners Inn"

MOTION        By Angie Parkinson  
                     seconded by Tom Rup

That the Town Council, acting as a Committee of the Whole for the Real Estate Acquisition and Disposition Committee with respect to the acquisition of 860 Main Street (the "Property") : (i) **waive** the survey requirement of Section 10-18 (b), given the fact that the Property is a commercial property with a deed description consistent with existing Town mapping; (ii) **authorize** the Mayor to enter into the attached Purchase and Sale Agreement with 860 Main, LLC and **acquire** the Property for the sum of \$950,000 upon notice from the Office of Corporation Counsel that the conditions and contingencies set forth in the Purchase and Sale Agreement have been satisfied; and (iii) **authorize** the use of Community Investment Funds, if they are available, or American Rescue Plan Act Funds, if Community Investment Funds are not available, to pay for due diligences costs, the purchase price, and all other costs associated with the acquisition.

Motion carried 9/0.

2022-2027 WIC Program Allocation Re: Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women

MOTION By Don Bell  
seconded by John Morrison  
to **adopt** the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC Program) is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture administered by the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health for services including provision of nutritious food, nutrition and health education, breastfeeding promotion and referrals to healthcare and social services for categorically eligible individuals found to be at nutritional and/or medical risk; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of East Hartford is submitting a proposal for WIC Program funding to the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health for the period October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2027;

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Town Council of the Town of East Hartford does support and authorize the submission of a proposal for WIC Program funding;

**AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** Michael P. Walsh, Mayor of the Town of East Hartford and in his absence, Richard F. Kehoe, Chair of the East Hartford Town Council, have been empowered to sign contracts and any of its amendments hereto, on behalf of the Town of East Hartford, between the Town of East Hartford and the Department of Public Health or its successor agency.

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

Recommendation from Real Estate Acquisition and Disposition Committee Re: Transfer of 1437-1439 Main Street

MOTION By Angie Parkinson  
seconded by Awet Tsegai

That the Town Council, at the recommendation of the Real Estate Acquisition and Disposition Committee, **waive** the appraisal requirement set forth in Town Ordinances 10-19(c) and **authorize the transfer** of 1437-1439 Main Street (the "Property") by Quit Claim Deed to Eden's Lodge LLC ("EDEN") for \$10,000, subject to the requirement that as part of the transaction conveying the property to EDEN, EDEN combines the Property with the property owned by EDEN at 1429 Main Street, East Hartford, Connecticut, such that 1437-1439 Main Street and 1429 Main Street shall henceforth comprise one parcel.

Motion carried 9/0.

## ARPA Allocation Re: Youth Services Adventure Plus Program

MOTION      By Awet Tsegai  
                  seconded by Don Bell  
                  to **adopt** the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**; the state Department of Education has allocated \$200,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to the Town of East Hartford's Adventure Plus Program operated by the Youth Services Department, and

**WHEREAS**; the goal of the Adventure Plus program is to provide Police Officers with strategies for effectively interacting with young people and to increase the likelihood of youth having a positive response to Police Officers,

**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 state Department of Education as they pertain to this ARPA allocation.

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

## 2022-23 Capital Improvement Plan Addition: Town Parks Improvement Projects

MOTION      By Angie Parkinson  
                  seconded by Don Bell  
                  to **adopt** the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**; the Town has been awarded \$1 million in state Bond Commission funds to undertake improvements to several parks to better serve residents, and;

**WHEREAS**; terms of this funding require that all grant-funded projects be listed on the Town's Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan and;

**NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED**; that the East Hartford Town Council does hereby approve the following projects be added to the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan:

Alumni Park Basketball Court	\$ 83,075
Hockanum Park Basketball Courts (2)	\$105,056
Foran Park Basketball Court	\$ 66,410
Martin Park Gate and Sign	\$ 10,000
Gorman Park Baseball Fields (1 & 2) Fencing	\$120,000
Gorman Park Baseball Fields (1 & 2) Dugouts	\$100,000
McAuliffe Park Grandstands (2)	\$120,000
TOTAL	\$604,541

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

## State Bond Commission Grants

### Town Park Improvements

MOTION      By Angie Parkinson  
                  seconded by Awet Tsegai  
                  to **adopt** the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**; the Connecticut Bond Commission has approved grant funding in the amount of \$1 million for improvements to Town Parks and Pools; and

**WHEREAS**; these funds are to be administered by the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection,

**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 state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection as they pertain to this Personal Services Agreement.

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

### East Hartford High School Softball Field and EH High School/Middle School Locker Room Restorations

MOTION      By Awet Tsegai  
                  seconded by Tom Rup  
                  to **adopt** the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**; pursuant to Public Act #607, 1979 As Amended Sec. 21 the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development is authorized to extend financial assistance for economic development projects; and

**WHEREAS**; it is desirable and in the public interest that the Town of East Hartford make an application to the State for \$950,000 in order to undertake softball field restorations at East Hartford High School and locker room renovations at East Hartford High School and East Hartford Middle School.,

**NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED**; that the Town Council is cognizant of the conditions and prerequisites for the state financial assistance imposed by Public Act #607, 1979 As Amended Sec. 21, and that the filing of an application for State financial assistance by the Town of East Hartford in an amount not to exceed \$950,000 is hereby approved and

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

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



authorized to extend financial assistance for economic development projects; and

**WHEREAS;** it is desirable and in the public interest that the Town of East Hartford make an application to the State for \$293,081 in order to undertake renovations to the East Hartford High School Auditorium,

**NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED;** that the Town Council is cognizant of the conditions and prerequisites for the state financial assistance imposed by Public Act #607, 1979 As Amended Sec. 21, and that the filing of an application for State financial assistance by the Town of East Hartford in an amount not to exceed \$293,081 is hereby approved and

**LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED;** that Michael P. Walsh, Mayor of the Town of East Hartford, is directed to execute and file such application with the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, to provide such additional information, to execute such other documents as may be required, to execute an Assistance Agreement with the State of Connecticut for State financial assistance if such an agreement is offered, to execute any amendments, decisions, and revisions thereto, and to act as the authorized representative of the Town of East Hartford

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

Chair Kehoe recognized the efforts of the town's state legislative delegation, State Senator Saud Anwar and State Representatives Jason Rojas, Henry Genga and Jeff Currey for their strong advocacy in support of the allocation of state bond funds for these critical town projects.

#### Hartford Judicial District Local Interagency Services Team (LIST) Grant

MOTION        By Don Bell  
                     seconded by Awet Tsegai  
                     to **adopt** the following resolution:

**WHEREAS;** the Town of East Hartford Youth Services Department serves as the administrator of the Hartford Judicial District Local Interagency Services Team (LIST); and

**WHEREAS;** the Hartford LIST is a collaboration among area youth service bureaus, the Connecticut Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division and the Connecticut Department of Children & Families; and

**WHEREAS;** the purpose of the LIST is coordinate local stakeholders in raising awareness about the needs of children and youth involved in the juvenile justice system, as well as planning, evaluating, and supporting juvenile justice services in each juvenile court catchment area,

**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 Connecticut Youth Services Association as they pertain to this LIST grant.

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

Amusement Permit Application Re: East Hartford Fall Festival

MOTION        By Awet Tsegai  
                     seconded by John Morrison

to **approve** the outdoor amusement permit application for the event entitled "East Hartford Fall Festival" as submitted by Scott Sansom, Chief of Police, scheduled for Saturday, October 8, 2022 from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Town Green/Alumni Park, with set up beginning at 8:00 am, with a rain date of Sunday, October 9, 2022 with the same hours, subject to compliance with adopted codes and regulations of the State of Connecticut, the Town of East Hartford, and any other stipulations required by the Town of East Hartford or its agencies.

Motion carried 9/0.

OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCILLORS TO DIRECT QUESTIONS TO THE ADMINISTRATION

No one came forward.

COUNCIL ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION MATTERS

People's United Bank, N.A. v. Town of East Hartford Re: Tax assessment appeal of 957 Main Street

MOTION        By Sebrina Wilson  
                     seconded by Awet Tsegai

to **accept** the recommendation of Corporation Counsel to settle the pending assessment (tax) appeal known as People's United bank, N.A. v. Town of East Hartford, Docket Number HHB-CV21-6067400-S, involving real property located at 957 Main Street, from the fair market value of \$753,857.00 to the fair market value of \$600,000.00 which shall generate a reduction of \$5,315.00 in property taxes, for the Grand List Year of 2020.

Motion carried 9/0.

The pending workers' claims of former Town employee, Frank Lavigne

MOTION        By Sebrina Wilson  
                     seconded by Travis Simpson

to **accept** the recommendation of Corporation Counsel to fully and finally settle the pending workers' compensation claims of former Town employee, Frank Lavigne, for a total sum of \$25,000.00.

Motion carried 9/0.

#### OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO SPEAK

Mayor Walsh took a moment to express his appreciation for the efforts of the Town Council and Administrative Departments with regards to the Mayor's "Control Tower" projects list provided earlier this year. The Mayor informed the Council that the Town currently has a Remonstrative Petition to address the issues with Faro Lounge (212 Burnside Avenue) that has been distributed to local property owners. Once completed, the petition will be presented to the state Liquor Control Commission.

#### ADJOURNMENT

MOTION      By John Morrison  
                  seconded by Don Bell  
                  to **adjourn** (10:54 p.m.)

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 October 4, 2022.

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