#### EAST HARTFORD TOWN COUNCIL

#### TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Classet J. Possek

TOWN CLERK

OCTOBER 20, 2020

PRESENT

Chair Richard F. Kehoe, Majority Leader Sebrina Wilson, Minority Leader

Esther B. Clarke, Councillors Connor Martin, Angela Parkinson, Awet Tsegai

and John Morrison

PRESENT

Vice Chair Donald Bell, Jr. and Councillor Patricia Harmon

Via "TEAMS"

### CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kehoe called the meeting to order at 7:30p.m. He noted that this is a combination – or hybrid – form of meeting where citizens, as well as Councillors, have the option of attending these meetings remotely, if so desired. He then invited the Council to join him in the pledge of allegiance.

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

<u>Vanessa Jenkins</u>, 26 Suffolk Drive, a member of the East Hartford Board of Education, spoke to the importance of transparency in government and suggested that the Council add it to the "Forward East Hartford Goals" that it will consider at the next Town Council meeting. Ms. Jenkins also stated that Board of Education members serve without compensation of any kind.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

## October 6, 2020 Public Hearing/Boundary Line for 144 Roberts Street

MOTION

By Sebrina Wilson

seconded by Esther Clarke

to approve the minutes of the October 6, 2020 Public Hearing.

Motion carried 9/0.

# October 6, 2020 Regular Meeting

MOTION

By Sebrina Wilson

seconded by John Morrison

approve the minutes of the October 6, 2020 Regular Meeting.

Motion carried 9/0.

Chair Kehoe recognized Majority Leader Sebrina Wilson's father, <u>Johnnie Wilson Sr.</u>, who came up from Charlotte North Carolina, to visit his daughter.

# **COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS**

#### Presentation: Hartford 400 Initiative

Mayor Leclerc introduced United States Congressman John Larson who called on Doug Suisman, Architect, with the Hartford 400 Initiative, to lead a PowerPoint discussion for a new river-centered vision focused on Hartford and East Hartford. This focus will include the restructuring of the highway system to connect both cities to the Connecticut River – and to each other – with new parks, boulevards, and much needed urban development. This would be accomplished by removing (relocating) the I-91 and I-84 interchanges, turning the 5 miles of concrete that is the basis for the "mixmaster" into approximately 130 acres of developable land. This allows for direct access to the Connecticut River via roadways and bicycle and walkable trails.

### Financial Updates from Finance Director Linda Trzetziak

### FY ending June 30, 2020 Financial Results

<u>Linda Trzetziak</u>, Finance Director, reported that compared to the budget figures that were given to the Council in June 2020, the revenues are \$3M over the budgeted amount while expenses are \$800,000 under budget. The bulk of the positive revenues are attributable to additional State funds over what was anticipated. She did note that a few of the departments showed revenues somewhat under budget due to the onset of COVID-19. Those departments are: Fire, Health, Tax, Parks & Recreation and Inspections & Permits.

As a percentage of budget, the Fund Balance as of June 30, 2020 will be at 10.3%, which will trigger an additional contribution to the OPEB Trust fund for retiree health insurance liabilities under the Town Ordinance §10-52 of nearly \$620,000.

### FY ending June 30, 2021 (September 30th -1st Quarter Update)

<u>Linda Trzetziak</u>, Finance Director, reported that considering the pandemic, the town remains consistent with previous budgets at the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the fiscal year – cautiously optimistic. There are some revenue shortfalls directly impacted by the pandemic, such as building rental fees, building and fire marshal inspection fees and other user generated fees. Director Trzetziak stated that her office is still working through the process for reimbursement for the COVID-19 expenses from FEMA and the State OPM Cares Act funding. When received, the revenue will be recorded as unbudgeted General Fund revenue. Tax Collections are encouraging; we have collected 54.1% of current year budgeted revenue roughly the same as in fiscal year 2019-2020.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

### Municipal Tax-exempt Lease Purchase Financing Agreement: 5-year CIP

MOTION By Angle Parkinson

seconded by Connor Martin to adopt the following resolution:

#### RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE A MUNICIPAL TAX-EXEMPT LEASE PURCHASE FINANCING AGREEMENT

WHEREAS the Town of East Hartford approved the purchase of various capital equipment including Town Hall furniture, vehicles for the Police, Fire and Public Works departments, cardiac monitors, Police body cameras, SWAT armor and helmets, and a Police real time crime center as part of the Town of East Hartford's Approved 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan for the fiscal years 2020-21 through 2024-25; and

WHEREAS the cost of the various capital equipment designated for lease-purchase financing totals \$2,538,220; and

WHEREAS the Town will budget \$546,000 in fiscal years 2021-22 through 2025-26 in the General Operating Fund to pay principal and interest on the purchases.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor of the Town of East Hartford is authorized to enter into a master lease purchase agreement and related documents with TD Equipment Finance, Inc. or their affiliates in the principal amount not to exceed \$2,538,220. The interest rate, payment schedule and other details of the financing shall be mutually determined between the company and the Mayor, whose signatures will indicate approval of specific terms and conditions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town declares its intent to be reimbursed for any temporary advances from the General Fund to pay for any part of the equipment from proceeds of the lease financing in accordance with Treasury Regulation 26 CFR 1.103-18 and/or 26 CFR 1.150-2.

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

### Community Connectivity Grant

MOTION

By Connor Martin

seconded by Awet Tsegai

to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS the of Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT) has made available funds under the Community Connectivity Program; and

WHEREAS the program seeks to improve accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians in urban, suburban and rural community centers.

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED that Marcia A. Leclerc, 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 DOT as they pertain to this Community Connectivity grant.

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

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

Awet Tsegai inquired on (1) the progress of development at the Founders Plaza project; (2) the status of the repairs to the Veterans Memorial Clubhouse; and (3) the repaired cupola on Town Hall. Mayor Leclerc, along with Development Director Eileen Buckheit, told the Council that the town is working with CRDA, First Merchant Group and Tecton Architects to create a new urban

destination at the Founders site. This is an opportunity for infill mixed-use development, allowing for new residential units and retail options to join the existing office tenants. (2) the Mayor stated that the chimney at the Veterans Memorial Clubhouse has been repaired, the temporary oil tank has been removed and the boiler has been replaced; and (3) the cupola at Town Hall has been repaired and the roof is next.

Angie Parkinson was surprised to see a number of Amazon trucks, while she was at the East Hartford Golf Course, that were going in and out of 88 Long Hill Street. Mayor Leclerc stated that it was a surprise to her as well, but that they are only using the far back section of the building. She is inquiring as to the long term intentions of Amazon for that site.

# OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO SPEAK

<u>Mayor Leclerc</u> commented on (1) leaf pickup will begin Monday November 2<sup>nd</sup> starting in the Pitkin Street area. See the town's website for more details; (2) East Hartford is seeing an increase in COVID-19 cases which means that the town will need to work with DECD to show what actions should be taken to counteract the increase; (3) the EHPD will hold "Taking Back Unwanted Prescription Drugs" day on Saturday October 24<sup>th</sup> at the Public Safety Complex from 10am to 2pm; (4) there are several alternatives available for children to celebrate Halloween, one of which is "Trunk or Treat" to be held on Saturday October 31<sup>st</sup> from 12-3 at the Pratt & Whitney airfield; and (5) the Silver Lane RFQ was re-bid on Thursday October 15<sup>th</sup> with an opening scheduled for November 30<sup>th</sup>.

Connor Martin announced the engagement of Vice Chair Don Bell to the love of his life, Nicole.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION

By Esther Clarke seconded by Don Bell to **adjourn** (9:50 p.m.). Motion carried 9/0.

The Chair announced the next meeting of the Town Council will be **Wednesday**, **November 4**<sup>th</sup>.

Attest

Angela M. Attenello TOWN COUNCIL CLERK