

EAST HARTFORD TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS

November 1, 2022

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

ABSENT

ALSO Mayor Michael Walsh
PRESENT Eileen Buckheit, Development Director
Cephus Nolan, Director of Youth Services

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kehoe called the meeting to order at 7:51 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

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
seconded by John Morrison

to remove Item 8A Lease Renewal Agreement with East Hartford Community Television from the agenda.

Motion carried 9/0.

RECOGNITIONS AND AWARDS

OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL ON AGENDA ITEMS

Pasquale "Bud" Salemi, 17 Pheasant Lane, spoke on behalf of the candidacies of Joan Gentile and himself as Commissioners of the Metropolitan District Commission.

Mayor Walsh stated (1) wished all a good evening; (2) A public hearing to discuss potential Planning and Zoning Regulation revisions is scheduled for November 3rd at 6 pm in Town Council Chambers; (3) The recent edition of the Pulse of East Hartford was released on 11/1; (4) Public Works began leaf collection on Monday, October 31st and will continue through December 10, weather-permitting; (5) The East Hartford Health Department will be holding two public flu/COVID-19 booster clinics in November; (6) November is National Smoking Cessation Month; (7) The Town has begun the development of an Affordable Housing Plan as required by state law. East Hartford residents are asked to complete a survey on the current housing situation; (8) The

statewide general election will take place on Tuesday, November 8, 2022, from 6 AM to 8 PM; (9) East Hartford Works! invites all individuals who are new homeowners or are about to purchase their first home, to an information session to be held Wednesday, November 9 from 6:30 to 7:30 PM at the East Hartford Public Library, located at 840 Main Street; (10) A wreath-laying ceremony at the World War I memorial in front of Raymond Library in honor of all Veterans will be held on the front lawn of the Raymond Library at 840 Main Street in East Hartford on Veterans Day, November 11, 2022 at 10:30 am; (11) All town offices, including the East Hartford Transfer Station, will be closed Friday, November 11, 2022 in observance of Veterans' Day. Leaf collection will not occur on that Friday. Curbside trash and recycling pickup will run on schedule with no delays. (12) A presentation on the "McCooks of Main Street" is scheduled at the East Hartford Public Library for Thursday, November 3rd at 6:30 PM; (13) Threads of Assumption artists invite the community to participate in the upcoming art exhibition on Thursday, November 17 from 6 – 7:30 PM in the East Hartford Public Library Makerspace; (14) November 1st was the final day to sign up for Town Thanksgiving and Christmas assistance programs; (15) An Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), a federal Internet subsidy is available for all families with students in East Hartford Public Schools to save on monthly internet fees; (16) East Hartford Resident Advisory Council meetings occur every third Monday from Noon-1 PM via Zoom; (17) Administration asks for residents to help "fight the blight" and report any issues of concern through "My East Hartford" app; (18) Teen and Adult Social Club is hosting bowling at Silver Lanes on November 11th. This event is open to participants with special needs ages 13 & up; (19) Youth basketball clinics are now available online at ehparcs.org; (20) East Hartford is looking to create a network of volunteers to assist with a variety of volunteer tasks. Please check the Town website for more information; (21) The Chamber of Commerce is hosting a networking session on the second Thursday of the month from 9-10:15 AM at the Goodwin University Community Room; (22) A number of Town Officials recently attended the grand opening of The Russell, a restaurant on Main Street; (23) The next Small Business Support open hours will be on Friday, November 18, 10:30 AM-12:30 PM at the East Hartford Public Library; (24) The "Crime Stats" daily arrest log will be posted weekly on the Town website; (25) The Fire Chief has provided a list of fire safety tips to keep families safe in the coming cold weather months.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

October 18, 2022 Executive Meeting

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by Tom Rup

to **approve** the minutes of the October 18, 2022 Executive Meeting.

Motion carried 9/0.

October 18, 2022 Regular Meeting

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by John Morrison

to **approve** the minutes of the October 18, 2022 Regular Meeting.

Motion carried 9/0.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Resignations from Town Boards and Commissions

The Chair stated that Kim Tipton and Joseph Garabedian have resigned from the Commission on Persons with Disabilities. There is a list of open positions available on a number of various boards and commissions via the Town website and the Chair encouraged residents to contact either the Mayor's office or Town Council office if there is an interest in participating.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

Lease Renewal Agreement with East Hartford Community Television

This item has been removed from the agenda.

East Hartford Juvenile Review Board Support and Enhancement Grant

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

WHEREAS; the State of Connecticut, through the Connecticut Youth Services Association (CYSA) has made funding available for the support and enhancement of the East Hartford Juvenile Review Board (JRB), and;

WHEREAS; the JRB offers a meaningful alternative to criminal court for East Hartford youth, ages 9-17, referred by the East Hartford Police Department, Public Schools and Youth Services,

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 of Connecticut and/or the CYSA as they pertain to this JRB Support and Enhancement Grant.

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

State Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services Local Prevention Council Grant

MOTION By Angie Parkinson
 seconded by John Morrison
 to **adopt** the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the State of Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) has made funding available to support local substance use disorder prevention for youth, and;

WHEREAS, the Town's Department of Youth Services wishes to use these funds to support activities geared toward alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) abuse prevention.

LET IT BE RESOLVED, that Michael P. Walsh, Mayor of the Town of East Hartford, is hereby authorized to execute on behalf of this municipality a grant application in an amount not to exceed \$7,142 with the State of Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to support the activities of a local alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse Prevention Council, and to execute and file any contracts, amendments or reports as may be required to successfully complete the terms of the grant contract.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Mayor Michael P. Walsh's term of office began on November 8, 2021 and will continue until November 13, 2023. As Mayor, Michael P. Walsh serves as the Chief Executive Officer for the Town of East Hartford, and is duly authorized to enter into agreements and contracts on behalf of the Town of East Hartford.

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

Recommendation from Fees Committee re: Greater Hartford Transit District Ticket Books

MOTION By Harry Amadasun
seconded by Tom Rup

to **table** the item 8D Recommendation from Fees Committee re: Greater Hartford Transit District Ticket Books pending further discussion.

Motion carried 9/0.

Re-Appointments to Metropolitan District Commission

MOTION By Don Bell
seconded by Travis Simpson

to **re-appoint** Joan Gentile, 1871 Main St, East Hartford, 06108 and Pasquale J. Salemi, 17 Pheasant Lane, East Hartford, 06108 as Commissioners of the Metropolitan District Commission; terms to expire December 2028.

Motion carried 9/0.

Town acquisition of 794-810 Silver Lane and 818-850 Silver Lane a.k.a. Silver Lane Plaza:

Authorization to Acquire Property

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

WHEREAS, The East Hartford Town Council is considering the acquisition of 794-810 Silver Lane (Tax Assessor's Map/Lot 45/130) and 818-850 Silver Lane (Tax Assessor's Map/Lot 45/131) (the "Silver Lane Properties") by eminent domain under the previously approved Silver Lane Redevelopment Plan: Chapter 130 Redevelopment, prepared for the Town of East Hartford, CT dated May 25, 2022 ("Plan"); and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Chapter 130 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the East Hartford Redevelopment Agency held duly noticed public hearings on August 25, 2022 and October 27, 2022 to consider the proposed acquisition of the Silver Lane Properties by eminent domain; and

WHEREAS, at its meeting on October 27, 2022, the East Hartford Redevelopment Agency voted to approve the acquisition of the Silver Lane Properties by eminent domain and refer the proposed acquisition to the East Hartford Town Council for its approval in accordance with Chapter 130 of the Connecticut General Statutes; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 130 of the Connecticut General Statutes provides that the East Hartford Redevelopment Agency may acquire the Silver Lane Properties by eminent domain, in the name of the Town of East Hartford (the "Town",) with the approval of the East Hartford Town Council; and

WHEREAS, the East Hartford Town Council has reviewed the two appraisals for each of the Silver Lane Properties prepared for the Town, and understands the conditions of, conditions affecting, uses, and other salient facts and characteristics of the Silver Lane Properties, including the fair market value of the Silver Lane Properties; and

WHEREAS, the East Hartford Town Council has (I) considered the benefits to the public and any private entity that will result from the redevelopment project set forth in the Plan and determined that the public benefits outweigh any private benefits for each of the Silver Lane Properties, (II) determined that the current use of each of the Silver Lane Properties cannot be feasibly integrated into the overall redevelopment plan, and (III) determined that the acquisition of each of the Silver Lane Properties by eminent domain is reasonably necessary to successfully achieve the objectives of the redevelopment plan; and

WHEREAS, the Silver Lane Properties are not being acquired by eminent domain for the primary purpose of increasing local tax revenue; and

WHEREAS, the East Hartford Town Council believes that the acquisition of the Silver Lane Properties by eminent domain is in the best interests of the Town.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED: That pursuant to Chapter 130 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the acquisition of the real property known as 794-810 Silver Lane (Tax Assessor's Map/Lot 45/130) and 818-850 Silver Lane (Tax Assessor's Map/Lot 45/131) (the "Silver Lane Properties") by

the East Hartford Redevelopment Agency by eminent domain, in the name of the Town of East Hartford, is hereby approved.

RESOLVED: That the acquisition of the Silver Lane Properties by the East Hartford Redevelopment Agency by eminent domain, in the name of the Town, shall occur within five (5) years from the date of this Resolution.

RESOLVED: That, upon the recommendation of the Mayor and certification from the Director of Finance that there is available unappropriated and unencumbered funds to meet such appropriation, the Town hereby appropriates the sum of Four Million Five Hundred Thirty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$4,535,000) for the costs associated with the acquisition of such Silver Lane Properties.

RESOLVED: That, in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes, the East Hartford Redevelopment Agency and the Mayor, or any designee of the Mayor, are hereby authorized to make, execute and deliver all such additional and supplemental documents, and to do and perform such acts and to take such actions as may be necessary or required for the acquisition of the Silver Lane Properties.

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

Appropriation of Funds

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

WHEREAS, at the May 26, 2022 meeting of the State Bond Commission, the Commission approved a grant-in-aid to the Town of East Hartford in the amount of \$10 million to assist with the redevelopment of the Silver Lane Corridor; and

WHEREAS, included in the approved list of eligible projects was future site acquisition and renovations within the Corridor; and

WHEREAS, on November 1, 2022, the East Hartford Town Council approved the acquisition of the real property known as 794-810 Silver Lane (Tax Assessor's Map/Lot 45/130) and 818-850 Silver Lane (Tax Assessor's Map/Lot 45/131) (the "Silver Lane Properties") by the East Hartford Redevelopment Agency by eminent domain, in the name of the Town of East Hartford; and,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the East Hartford Town Council does hereby approve the following items:

1. The expenditure of Four Million Five Hundred Thirty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$4,535,000) for the costs associated with the acquisition of such Silver Lane Properties.
2. The funding source will be the \$10 million in State Bond Commission funds for the redevelopment of the Silver Lane Corridor.

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

OPPORTUNITY FOR COUNCILLORS TO DIRECT QUESTIONS TO THE ADMINISTRATION

Councillor Simpson asked the Mayor to confirm if the East Hartford's Superintendent of schools, Nathan Quesnel is leaving the position. *The Mayor confirmed that Mr. Quesnel intends to leave at the end of the school year.*

COUNCIL ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION MATTERS

The pending assessment (tax) appeal known as C2HPS LLC v. Town of East Hartford - HHB-CV22-6073227-S, involving real property located at 43-45 Thomas Street, East Hartford for the Grand List year 2021.

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by Travis Simpson

to **accept** the recommendation of Corporation Counsel to settle the pending assessment (tax) appeal known as C2HPS LLC v. TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD, Docket Number HHB-CV22-6073227-S, involving real property located at 43-45 Thomas Street, East Hartford from the fair market value of \$759,171.00 to the fair market value of \$723,000.00 which shall generate a reduction of \$1,250.00 in property taxes, for the Grand List Year of 2021.

Motion carried 9/0.

The pending assessment (tax) appeal known as Gjonbalaj, Mal v. Town of East Hartford - HHB CV22 - 6072901-S, involving real property located at 110 Silver Lane, East Hartford for the Grand List year 2021.

MOTION By Sebrina Wilson
 seconded by Travis Simpson

to **accept** the recommendation of Corporation Counsel to settle the pending assessment (tax) appeal known as GJONBALAJ, MAL v. TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD, Docket Number HHB CV22 - 6072901-S, involving real property located at 110 Silver Lane, East Hartford from the fair market value of \$362,400.00 to the fair market value of \$320,000.00 which shall generate a reduction of \$1,465.00 in property taxes, for the Grand List Year of 2021.

Motion carried 9/0.

OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO SPEAK

The Mayor thanked the Council for supporting the motion regarding the Silver Lane Plaza as well as the efforts of the Redevelopment Agency and others who have been engaged in the process thus far.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION By John Morrison
 seconded by Don Bell
 to **adjourn** (9:07 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 November 15, 2022.

Attest _____

Jason Marshall
TOWN COUNCIL CLERK