

January 19, 2021

APPROVED MINUTES
VERNON TOWN COUNCIL
VIRTUAL REGULAR MEETING

TELECONFERENCE CALL IN NUMBER: 1-929-205-6099

MEETING ID: 830 4282 3145 PASSWORD: 0119

TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2021 – 7:30 PM

RECEIVED
VERNON TOWN CLERK
21 FEB 11 AM 11:13

Mayor Daniel A. Champagne called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

A.) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Recited

B.) ROLL CALL

Present: Council Members Laura Bush, Thomas DiDio, Linda Gessay, Ann Letendre, Maryann Levesque, Brian Motola, Pauline Schaefer, Jim Tedford, Steve Wakefield, Michael Wendus

Absent: Bill Campbell, Julie Clay

Entered During Virtual Regular Meeting:

Also Present: Town Administrator Michael J. Purcaro, Recording Secretary Kathleen Minor

C.) CITIZENS FORUM

- Ann Letendre, 29 Gottier Drive, spoke regarding COVID vaccine
- Maryann Levesque, 183 Bolton Road, spoke regarding various topics
- Genaro Gonzalez, 59 High Street – spoke regarding various topics

7:40PM – Citizens Forum ended.

E.) PUBLIC HEARING

None

F.) PRESENTATIONS BY THE ADMINISTRATION

Mayor Daniel A. Champagne updated the Town Council on the following topics:

- Chief of Police Kenny has announced his retirement for this coming July.
- The police department has hired two new officers.
- The Board of Education and all Town departments have submitted budgets for review and the Mayor's budget will be delivered to the Town Council on March 15, 2021.
- The Housing Authority delivered their annual PILOT check in the amount of \$85,658.01.
- The Town of Vernon Finance Department received the for the 29th consecutive year, the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association.
- ECHN update regarding temporary shifting of services from RGH to MMH due to decrease in admissions during the pandemic. Mayor Champagne urged everyone to not hesitate to seek medical attention.
- The Town of Vernon and ECHN have partnered to host daily COVID-10 vaccination clinics at RGH by appointment only per the press release dated today.

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G.) ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, made a motion to move the Consent Agenda. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

- C 1. Request the Town Council approve Tax Refunds for Prior and Current years.** (See copy of a memorandum from Terry Hjarne, Collector of Revenue, to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator dated January 6, 2021 included in the Council packet.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES (5) TAX REFUNDS FOR PRIOR YEARS TOTALING \$1,104.60 AND SIXTEEN (16) CURRENT YEAR TAX REFUNDS TOTALING \$7,909.20 AS REFERENCED IN THE MEMORANDUM FROM TERRY HJARNE, COLLECTOR OF REVENUE TO MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR DATED JANUARY 6, 2021.

- C 2. Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of Everett Ray Weaver, (U), 14 Deepwood Drive, Vernon, Connecticut as a regular member of the Water Pollution Control Authority, said term to commence on January 20, 2021 and expires on December 31, 2021.** (See a copy of Mr. Weaver's resume included for Council review. It should be noted that Mr. Weaver is completing the unexpired term of Carina Hart.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO CHARTER CHAPTER VIII, SEC. 3; AND CHARTER CHAPTER XII, SEC. 4, THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF EVERETT RAY WEAVER, (U), 14 DEEPWOOD DRIVE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT, AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY, SAID APPOINTMENT TO COMMENCE ON JANUARY 20, 2021 AND EXPIRES DECEMBER 31, 2021.

- C 3. Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's reappointment of James Kenny, Vernon's Chief of Police, 725 Hartford Turnpike, Vernon, Connecticut to the Vernon Traffic Authority as a regular member, said term to commence on February 21, 2021 and expires February 20, 2024.** (Chief Kenny is an employee of the Town of Vernon and therefore no resume included.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO THE VERNON TOWN CODE, ARTICLE II, SECTIONS 13-16 AND 13-17; THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S REAPPOINTMENT OF CHIEF JAMES KENNY, 725 HARTFORD TURNPIKE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT, AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE TRAFFIC AUTHORITY. SAID TERM TO COMMENCE

H.) DISCUSSION OF PULLED CONSENT ITEM(S)

None

I.) PENDING BUSINESS

None

J.) NEW BUSINESS

1. **Request the Town Council authorize the transfer of FY 2019-2020 funds from the Board of Education Operating Budget to the Capital and Non-Recurring Account in the amount of \$129,077.00.** (See letter from Dr. Joseph Macary, Superintendent of Schools to Mayor Daniel A. Champagne dated December 8, 2020 relative to same. It should be noted that this request is in addition to the request by the Board of Education on July 21, 2020 approved by the Council in the amount of \$431,906.30.)

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PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL APPROVES THE TRANSFER OF \$129,077.00 FROM AVAILABLE FUNDS IN THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OPERATING BUDGET FY 2019-2020 TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION RESERVE FUND FOR CAPITAL AND NON-RECURRING EXPENDITURES.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Bush, made a motion to approve the transfer of \$129,077.00 from available funds in the Board of Education operating budget FY 2019-2020 to the Board of Education reserve fund for capital and non-recurring expenditures. Superintendent Dr. Joseph Macary answered questions. Discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

2. **Request the Town Council approve the asset disposal request for the Vernon Board of Education.** (See memorandum from Jeffrey A. O'Neill, Finance Officer and Treasurer to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator dated December 29, 2020 relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE DISPOSAL OF ASSETS FOR THE VERNON BOARD OF EDUCATION AS DISCLOSED ON THE FIXED ASSET INFORMATION FORMS.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, made a motion to approve the disposable assets for the Vernon Board of Education. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

3. **Request the Town Council approve the bid waiver and authorize the purchase of a bulldozer for the Department of Public Works, previously discussed at the November 17, 2020 Town Council meeting.** (See memorandum from Dwight Ryniewicz, Director of Public Works dated January 12, 2021 to Mayor Daniel A. Champagne, Town Administrator, Michael Purcaro and Finance Officer and Treasurer Jeffrey A. O'Neill relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

RESOLVE, THE TOWN COUNCIL, CONSISTENT WITH THE TOWN CHARTER, CHAPTER 12, SECTION 9, HEREBY WAIVES THE BID PROCEDURE FOR THE COST OF PURCHASING A USED BULLDOZER FROM **WILCOX EXCAVATING CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, INC., 71 WILLOW STREET, SOUTH WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT 06074 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$74,900.00**, AND FURTHER AUTHORIZES TOWN ADMINISTRATOR MICHAEL J. PURCARO TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS RELATIVE TO SAME. FURTHER, THE TOWN COUNCIL AUTHORIZES THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$74,900.00 FROM THE **GENERAL FUND TO CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS - OTHER EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY** FOR SAID PURCHASE.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made a motion to waive the bid procedure for the cost of purchasing a used bulldozer from Wilcox Excavation Construction Company, Inc. and authorizes Town Administrator Michael J. Purcaro to execute any and all documents relative to the same and authorizes the transfer of funds in the amount of \$74,900.00

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from the General Fund to Capital Improvements-Other Equipment and Machinery for said purchase. Dwight Ryniewicz, Director of Public Works and Eric Jensen, Fleet Maintainer, spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued. Motion carried by roll call vote with 9 in favor and 1 abstention (Wendus).

4. **Request the Town Council approve the bid waiver requested by Jeffrey A. O'Neill, Finance Officer and Treasurer for Auditing Services.** (See the proposal offered by Michael J. VanDeventer, Partner at MahoneySabol for extension of services for 1,2, and 3 years for review. Also included is a memorandum from Jeffrey A. O'Neill, Finance Officer and Treasurer to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator dated January 7, 2021 relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

RESOLVE, THE TOWN COUNCIL, CONSISTENT WITH THE TOWN CHARTER, CHAPTER 12, SECTION 9, HEREBY WAIVES THE BID PROCEDURE FOR THE EXTENSION OF A CONTRACT FOR AUDITING SERVICES PROVIDED BY MAHONEYSABOL, 180 **GLASTONBURY BOULEVARD, SUITE 400, GLASTONBURY, CONNECTICUT 06033** AND FURTHER AUTHORIZES TOWN ADMINISTRATOR MICHAEL J. PURCARO TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS RELATIVE TO SAME.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, made a motion to waive the bid procedure for the extension of a contract for auditing services provided by Mahoney Sabol & Company, LLP and further authorizes Town Administrator Michael J. Purcaro to execute any and all documents relative. Jeffrey A. O'Neill, Finance Officer and Treasurer spoke and answered questions. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

7. **Request the Town Council authorize the Vernon Senior Center's application for the Department of Aging and Disability Services, State Unit on Aging, Cares Act Funding Opportunity.** (See memorandum from Maureen Gabrielle, Senior Center Director dated January 15, 2021 to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL AUTHORIZES THE VERNON SENIOR CENTER'S APPLICATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES, STATE UNIT ON AGING, CARES ACT FUNDING.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made a motion to authorize the Vernon Senior Center's application for the Department of Aging and Disability Services, State Unit on Aging, CARES Act funding. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

5. **Request the Town Council authorize Finance Officer and Treasurer Jeffrey A. O'Neill to submit a request on behalf of the Town of Vernon for reimbursement to the Office of Policy and Management relative to Corona Virus Relief.** (See memorandum from Jeffrey A. O'Neill, Finance Officer and Treasurer to Daniel A. Champagne, Mayor and Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator dated January 6, 2021 relative to same.)

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PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY AUTHORIZES JEFFREY A. O'NEILL, FINANCE OFFICER AND TREASURER TO SUBMIT A REQUEST TO RECEIVE \$344,225.00 IN ADDITIONAL CORONA VIRUS RELIEF FUNDS VIA THE OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT PORTAL.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, made a motion to authorize Jeffrey A. O'Neill, Finance Officer and Treasurer to submit a request to receive \$344,225.00 in additional Corona Virus Relief Funds via the Office of Policy and Management portal. Mr. O'Neill spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued. Motion carried with 9 in favor (Council Member Wakefield had connectivity issues).

6. **Update on the Citizens Block Project.**

Mayor Champagne updated the Town Council on the progress of the Citizen's Block project and answered questions. A copy of the blueprints will be sent to the Town Council in the near future.

K.) INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

None

L.) ACTION ON ORDINANCE(S) PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED

None

M.) IDENTIFICATION/ADOPTION OF ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS

None

N.) DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL ITEMS AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

None

O.) ADOPTION OF MINUTES

THE TOWN COUNCIL WAIVES THE READING OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING ON **DECEMBER 15, 2020** AND THAT MINUTES OF SAID MEETING BE APPROVED.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, made a motion to waive the reading of and approve the minutes of the regular Town Council meeting held on December 15, 2020. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

THE TOWN COUNCIL WAIVES THE READING OF THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE VERNON TOWN COUNCIL AND THE VERNON BOARD OF EDUCATION ON **JANUARY 5, 2021** AND THAT MINUTES OF SAID MEETING BE APPROVED.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Wendus, made a motion to waive the reading of and approve the minutes of the Special Joint Meeting of the Vernon Town Council and the Vernon Board of Education meeting held on January 5, 2021. Motion carried by voice vote with 9 in favor and 1 abstention (Schaefer).

D.) EXECUTIVE SESSION

8:28 PM - Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque made the following motion to enter into Executive Session #1:

THE TOWN COUNCIL PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY GIVEN IN CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES 1-200 (6) (B), HEREBY MOVES TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

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TO DISCUSS TAX SETTLEMENT RELATIVE TO **JLS REALTY, LLC, 70 WILSON LANE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT PARCEL NUMBER: 07002400027** AND INVITES MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, DAVID WHEELER, TOWN ASSESSOR AND TOWN ATTORNEY LOU SPADACCINI, TO ATTEND.

Mayor Champagne announced that anyone other than the Town Council and those asked to join the executive session will be put into a holding room on the virtual call until each executive session ends.

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

8:38 PM - Executive Session #1 ended and resulted in the following action:

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made a motion for the Town Council to authorize Town Attorney Lou Spadaccini to settle the tax appeal CV-20-6060207-S captioned "JLS Realty, LLC vs Town of Vernon" relative to the property commonly known as 70 Wilson Lane, Map 07, Block 0024, Lot 00027, for taxes on the Grand List of October 1, 2019 for the assessed value of \$350,000 or the 100% market value of \$500,000 and to adjust assessment and tax bill for January 1, (2020) 2021 for the 2019 Grand List. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

8:40 PM - Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, made the following motion to enter into Executive Session #2:

THE TOWN COUNCIL PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY GIVEN IN CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES 1-200 (6) (D), HEREBY MOVES TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION RELATIVE TO CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS AND INVITES MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, SHAUN GATELY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR AND TOWN ATTORNEY LOU SPADACCINI, TO ATTEND.

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote

9:02 PM - Executive Session #2 ended and resulted in the following action:

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Gessay, made a motion to authorize Mayor Daniel A. Champagne to sign all necessary documents relative to the purchase and sale agreement with Vernon Mill Owner, LLC for the properties known formerly as Amerbelle to include 5 Brooklyn Street, 104 East Main Street and 98 East Main Street. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

P.) INFORMATIONAL ITEMS, PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, CORRESPONDENCE, REPORTS, ETC. NOT REQUIRING ACTION

1. Monthly Report – Town Clerk, November, 2020 as submitted by Karen Daigle, Town Clerk.
2. Monthly Report – Vernon Police Department, November, 2020 as submitted by Captain John Kelley.
3. Monthly Report – Vernon Police Department, December, 2020 as submitted by Captain John Kelley.
4. Monthly Report – Town Clerk, December, 2020 as submitted by Karen Daigle, Town Clerk.

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Q.) ADJOURN (9:04PM)

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Received: January 25, 2021

Approved: February 2, 2021

Respectfully Submitted.



Kathleen Minor
Recording Secretary