

February 16, 2021

APPROVED MINUTES
VERNON TOWN COUNCIL
VIRTUAL REGULAR MEETING
TELECONFERENCE CALL IN NUMBER: 1-929-205-6099
MEETING ID: 811 1990 4809 PASSWORD: 0216
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2021 – 7:30 PM

RECEIVED
VERNON TOWN CLERK
21 MAR 30 PM 12:36

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, Bill Campbell, Julie Clay, Thomas DiDio, Linda Gessay, Ann Letendre, Maryann Levesque, Brian Motola, Pauline Schaefer, James Tedford, Steve Wakefield, Michael Wendus

Absent:

Entered During Virtual Regular Meeting:

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

C.) CITIZENS FORUM

- Genaro Gonzalez, 9 High Street – spoke regarding COVID-19 vaccine

7:38PM Citizens forum ended – to be continued after Public Hearing

E.) PUBLIC HEARING

PUBLIC HEARING TO RECEIVE COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS REGARDING THE PROPOSED NEW ORDINANCE ENTITLED “ORDINANCE NO. ____, TOWN OF VERNON ENERGY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT AND ENERGY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT BOARD”, AND THE **REPEAL** OF “ORDINANCE #292, “AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING AN ENERGY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT AND ENERGY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT BOARD”.
(A copy of the Ordinance has been included in the Council packet.)

7:38PM - Mayor Daniel A. Champagne called the Public Hearing to order

Recording Secretary read the Public Hearing Notice into the record.

Mayor Champagne called for Public Comment

- Ann Letendre, 29 Gottier Drive, spoke in support of ordinance
- Tom Didio, 112 Box Mountain Drive, spoke in support of ordinance

7:42PM – Public Hearing closed

C.) CITIZENS FORUM (continued 7:42PM)

- Tom Didio, 112 Box Mountain Drive, spoke regarding the recent vaccination clinic held at the Senior Center and commended the staff and Administration.

Mayor Champagne commented that staff continues to take names daily at the call center.

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7:44PM Citizens forum ended – to be resumed after virtual Public Hearing/Special Town Meeting

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY MOVES TO RECESS UNTIL THE CONCLUSION OF THE VIRTUAL SPECIAL TOWN MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING RELATIVE TO THE CENTER ROAD SCHOOL ROOF PROJECT.

7:45PM – Mayor Champagne called for a recess to begin the virtual Public Hearing/Special Town Meeting

7:54PM – Regular meeting resumed

C.) CITIZENS FORUM (continued 7:54PM)

- David Forrest, 82 Wildwood Road spoke in support of item #2 under New Business on the agenda

7:56PM – Citizens Forum closed

G.) ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Bush, 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 Current years.** (See copy of a memorandum from Terry Hjarne, Collector of Revenue, to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator dated February 5, 2021 included in the Council packet.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES TWELVE (12) CURRENT YEAR TAX REFUNDS TOTALING \$21,108.11 AS REFERENCED IN THE MEMORANDUM FROM TERRY HJARNE, COLLECTOR OF REVENUE TO MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR DATED FEBRUARY 5, 2021.

F.) PRESENTATIONS BY THE ADMINISTRATION

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

- Property at 133 Tunnel Road recently sold to 111 Main Street, LLC for commercial use
- Thank you to Ocean State Job Lot for their second donation of PPE for our first responders
- Three town owned properties acquired through previous foreclosures or other means on Chestnut Street were sold adding these parcels back to the grand list.
- Dr Parnes pediatric practice has partnered with Pro Health Physicians and relocated to 206 Talcottville Road
- Vaccine initiative updates including the partnering towns that have joined Vernon, mobile clinics, and upcoming clinic at the American Legion.

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Council Member Didio personally thanked the Administration for their efforts with the vaccination efforts.

H.) DISCUSSION OF PULLED CONSENT ITEM(S)

None

I.) PENDING BUSINESS

None

J.) NEW BUSINESS

1. **Request the Town Council approve meeting dates for 2021-2022 budget meetings.** (See memorandum dated February 12, 2021 to Mayor Daniel A. Champagne, the Vernon Town Council and Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator from Diane Wheelock, Executive Assistant relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION #1

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY SCHEDULES THE FOLLOWING BUDGET MEETING DATES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022 BUDGET DELIBERATIONS:

MONDAY, MARCH 22, 2021, THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 2021, MONDAY, MARCH 29, 2021, THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 2021 AND MONDAY, APRIL 5, 2021 WITH A START TIME OF 7:00 PM; AND SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 2021 WITH A START TIME OF 9:00 AM. PUBLIC HEARINGS WILL BE SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 2021 WITH A START TIME OF 9:05 AM AND THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 2021 WITH A START TIME OF 7:05AMPM TO HEAR COMMENT AND ANSWER

QUESTIONS RELATIVE TO THE 2021-2022 TOWN OF VERNON

BUDGET. ALL BUDGET MEETINGS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS WILL BE HELD IN THE TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, THIRD FLOOR, TOWN HALL, 14 PARK PLACE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT. DUE TO THE COVID PANDEMIC SAID MEETINGS MAY BE CONDUCTED VIA ZOOM.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Levesque made a motion to approve the budget meeting dates for fiscal year 2021-2022 budget deliberations. Discussion ensued. Motion carried by roll call vote.

2. **Request the Town Council authorize the application for a grant offered by State of Connecticut DEEP for Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Management in the amount of \$14,061.75, by the Parks and Recreation Department.** (See memorandum from Marty Sitler, Director of Parks and Recreation dated February 9, 2021 to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY AUTHORIZES THE ADMINISTRATION TO APPLY FOR THE GRANT OFFERED BY THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT, DEEP FOR AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$14,061.75. THE TOWN COUNCIL FURTHER AUTHORIZES MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR TO SIGN ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS RELATIVE TO SAME.

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Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer made a motion for Administration to apply for the State of Connecticut DEEP for Aquatic Invasive Species Management grant in the amount of \$14,061.75 and further authorizes Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator to sign any and all documents. No discussion. Motion carried by roll call vote.

3. **Request the Town Council authorize Parks and Recreation to join the Town of Bolton and the Friends of Bolton Lakes to apply for a grant offered by the State of Connecticut DEEP in the amount of \$38,144.00.** (See memorandum from Marty Sitler, Director of Parks and Recreation dated February 9, 2021 to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY AUTHORIZES THE ADMINISTRATION TO APPLY FOR THE GRANT OFFERED BY THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT, DEEP FOR AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$38,144.00. THE TOWN COUNCIL FURTHER AUTHORIZES MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR TO SIGN ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS RELATIVE TO SAME.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer made a motion for Administration to apply for the grant offered by the State of Connecticut DEEP for Aquatic Invasive Species Management in the amount of \$38,144.00 and authorizes Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator to sign any and all documents. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

4. **Request the Town Council authorize the Fire Department to apply for a grant offered by the Assistance for Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program, through the Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) in the amount of \$73,833.86.** (See memorandum from Fire Chief Stephen Eppler dated February 8, 2021 to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY AUTHORIZES THE FIRE DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION, ASSISTANCE FOR FIREFIGHTERS GRANT – 2020 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$73,833.86. THE TOWN COUNCIL FURTHER AUTHORIZES MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR TO SIGN ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS RELATIVE TO SAME.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Bush, made a motion to authorize the Fire Department to apply for the Federal Emergency Management Association, Assistance for Firefighters Grant – 2020 in the amount of \$73,833.86 and further authorizes Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator to sign any and all documents. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

K.) INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

None

L.) ACTION ON ORDINANCE(S) PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED

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Ordinance entitled "Ordinance No. ____, Town of Vernon Energy Improvement District and Energy Improvement District Board" AND REPEALING "Ordinance No. 292 entitled "Ordinance Establishing Energy Improvement District And Energy Improvement District Board". (A number will be assigned to the new Ordinance once the Ordinance has passed Town Council vote.)

(ACTION - PUBLIC HEARING HELD IN SECTION "E")

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL, CONSISTENT WITH CHAPTER V, SECTIONS 4 & 6 OF THE VERNON TOWN CHARTER, HEREBY MOVES TO APPROVE THE ORDINANCE ENTITLED, "**ORDINANCE NO. ____, TOWN OF VERNON ENERGY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT AND ENERGY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT BOARD**" AND FURTHER THE TOWN COUNCIL **REPEALS "ORDINANCE #292, AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING ENERGY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT AND ENERGY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT BOARD"**, AS AMENDED.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Letendre, moved to approve the ordinance entitled "Ordinance No.____, Town of Vernon Energy Improvement District and Energy Improvement District Board" and further, the Town Council repeals Ordinance #292 as amended. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

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 **FEBRUARY 2, 2021** AND THAT MINUTES OF SAID MEETING BE APPROVED.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, made a motion to waive the reading of the minutes from the February 2, 2021 regular meeting and accept them as amended. Motion carried by voice vote with one abstention (Tedford).

8:13PM – Mayor Champagne called for a recess until the end of the virtual Public Hearing/
Special Town Meeting

9:21PM – Virtual regular meeting resumed

D.) EXECUTIVE SESSION

9:21PM – Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Gessay made the following motion to enter into Executive Session:

THE TOWN COUNCIL PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY GIVEN IN CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES 1-200 (2) , HEREBY MOVES TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION RELATIVE TO PERSONNEL AND INVITES MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, AND DAWN MASELEK, ASSISTANT TOWN ADMINISTRATOR TO ATTEND.

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Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

9:32PM – Executive Session ended – no action taken.

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

1. Monthly Report – January, 2021, Vernon Police Department as submitted by Captain John Kelley.

Q.) ADJOURN (9:32PM)

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

Received: March 3, 2021

Approved: March 16, 2021

Respectfully Submitted,



Kathleen Minor
Recording Secretary