

MINUTES  
VERNON TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING  
TOWN HALL – 14 PARK PLACE – 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2021 – 7:30 PM

RECEIVED  
VERNON TOWN CLERK  
21 OCT 12 AM 10:57

Mayor Daniel 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, Jim Tedford, Steve Wakefield and Michael Wendus

**Absent:**

**Entered During Meeting:**

**Also Present:** Town Administrator Michael Purcaro, Recording Secretary Karen Daigle

F.) **PRESENTATIONS BY THE ADMINISTRATION**

- Mayor Daniel A. Champagne presented a Proclamation thanking **Distinctive Tree Care** and owner Jason Yerke for the donation of professional services assisting with the removal of roadside trees near the entrance to Valley Falls Park.
- Mayor Daniel A. Champagne presented a Proclamation to Daniel Wasilewski, Fire Marshal in honor of **Fire Prevention Week, October 3-9, 2021.**
- Mayor Daniel A. Champagne presented the inductees for the **Volunteer Wall of Honor**
  - Christy Vale
  - Tim Poloski
  - Marie Herbst, accepted by her daughters
  - Anne Fisher

7:48 PM Recess; 8:03 PM Reconvened

C.) **CITIZEN'S FORUM (8:04 PM)**

Genaro Gonzalez, 137 West Main Street, expressed his concern for his community and requested help, and the Covid-19 vaccine.

Citizen's Forum ended at 8:11 PM

F.) **PRESENTATIONS BY THE ADMINISTRATION (continued)**

Mayor Daniel A. Champagne made a presentation to the Town Council on various topics.

- Over the last month, there have been two events with Vernon's Volunteer Fire Department:
  - (1) On October 2<sup>nd</sup> the "wet down" ceremony for Squad 441 and Engine Tank 341 was held. A "wet down" ceremony is a tradition in the fire service which dates back to the late 1800's, and we are happy to carry on this tradition with our very dedicated volunteer firefighters. Thank you to all.
  - (2) Light the Night for Fallen Firefighters held each October has expanded to include fire department and families. The Town of Vernon participated with

lighting all the firehouses and Fox Hill Tower in red lights. We are grateful for the Vernon Volunteer Fire Department and all members for all their many sacrifices on our behalf.

- The Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), New England Civil War Museum located in Town Hall will celebrate its reopening on Saturday, October 9<sup>th</sup> from 10 AM – 4 PM, with a ceremony, living history encampment and museum tours, all happening in Central Park.
- The Rockville High School 'RAM Band" has their annual Band Competition at Rockville High School on October 9<sup>th</sup>.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Trunk or Treat will be held on October 28, 2021 from 4:30 PM – 6:30 PM at Henry Park. If you would like to participate in this drive-thru event sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Department, please call 860-870-3520.
- The annual Arctic Splash is planned for Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at Valley Falls Park, from 1:00 PM, with check-in at 12:30 PM. Proceeds benefit Send-a-Kid Scholarship Fund, which assist families in sending their young children to summer camp. Please call Parks and Recreation at 860-870-3520 for details and to sign up.
- The Rockville Public Library is hosting a family-friendly, free concert series in their upper parking lot, with all concerts beginning at 6:00 PM. The next concert is October 21<sup>st</sup> featuring the Elderly Brothers, an oldies rock-n-roll band with the final concert November 4<sup>th</sup> featuring Rosie Porter and the Neon Moons, a classic country group. Come join the fun!

**E.) PUBLIC HEARING**  
None

**G.) ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA**

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made a motion to move the Consent Agenda. Council Member Letendre pulled Consent #2. Motion to approve Consent items #1 and #3 carried unanimously.

- 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 September 17, 2021 is included in the Council packet.)

**PROPOSED MOTION**

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES TWENTY-SIX (26) PRIOR YEAR TAX REFUNDS TOTALING \$6,512.69 AND TWENTY-THREE (23) CURRENT YEAR TAX REFUNDS TOTALING \$7,302.80 AS REFERENCED IN THE MEMORANDUM FROM TERRY HJARNE, COLLECTOR OF REVENUE TO MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR DATED SEPTEMBER 17, 2021.

- C 3. Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of William Francis, (R), 41 Pinnacle Road, Vernon, Connecticut as a regular member of the Zoning Board of Appeals, said term to commence October 6, 2021 and expires on June 30, 2024.** (A copy of Mr. Francis' resume is included for Council review. Mr. Francis will be completing the unexpired term of James Ferguson.)

**PROPOSED MOTION**

PURSUANT TO VERNON'S CHARTER CHAPTER VIII, SEC. 2 & 6; THE TOWN COUNCIL APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF WILLIAM FRANCIS, (R), 41 PINNACLE ROAD, VERNON, CONNECTICUT

AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS, SAID TERM TO BEGIN ON OCTOBER 6, 2021 AND EXPIRES JUNE 30, 2024.

H.) DISCUSSION OF PULLED CONSENT ITEMS

- C 2. Request the Town Council approve FY21 budget amendment requests #19, #20, #21, #22, #23, #24, #25, #26, #27 and #28 as submitted by Jeffrey A. O’Neill, Finance Officer and Treasurer. (See memorandum from Jeffrey A. O’Neill, Finance Officer and Treasurer to Mayor Daniel A. Champagne and Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator relative to same.)

**PROPOSED MOTION**

RESOLVED, THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES BUDGET AMENDMENT REQUESTS #19, #20, #21, #22, #23, #24, #25, #26, #27 AND #28 FOR FY21 AS PROVIDED ON THE BUDGET AMENDMENT FORMS SUBMITTED BY JEFFREY A. O’NEILL, FINANCE OFFICER AND TREASURER.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Wendus, made a motion to approve Consent #2. Finance Director, Jeff O’Neill and Director of Public Works, Dwight Ryniewicz, spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously.

I.) PENDING BUSINESS

None

J.) NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Request the Town Council submit application for Local Prevention Council Grant funds on behalf of the Local Prevention Council to support initiatives to prevent substance abuse by minors in the amount of \$9,142.00. (See the memorandum from Michelle Hill, Director of Youth Services to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator regarding same.)

**PROPOSED MOTION**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL AUTHORIZES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS TO MAKE APPLICATION FOR AND RECEIVE LOCAL PREVENTION COUNCIL GRANT FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$9,142.00.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, proposed a resolution to authorize Mayor Daniel A. Champagne execute any and all documents to make application for and receive Local Prevention Council Grant Funds in the amount of \$9,142.00. Director of Youth Services, Michelle Hill, spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously.

- 2. Request the Town Council submit application to the State of Connecticut Department of Housing, through the Small Cities Grant Program on behalf of KIDSAFE CT. (See memorandum from Peter Testa, A & E Services Group, LLC., to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator dated September 29, 2021 requesting same.)

**PROPOSED RESOLUTION**

RESOLVE, THE VERNON TOWN COUNCIL, ON BEHALF OF KIDSAFE, CT DOES HEREBY APPROVE THE APPLICATION FOR AND ACCEPTANCE OF

A STATE OF CONNECTICUT, SMALL CITIES GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$150,000. THE TOWN COUNCIL FURTHER APPROVES THE RESOLUTION ENTITLED, ***"CERTIFIED RESOLUTION OF APPLICANT CONNECTICUT SMALL CITIES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM"***, AS PRESENTED.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Bush, proposed a resolution, on behalf of Kidsafe, CT, hereby approving the application for and acceptance of a State of Connecticut, small cities grant in the amount of \$150,000, and further approves the resolution entitled, ***"CERTIFIED RESOLUTION OF APPLICANT CONNECTICUT SMALL CITIES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM"***. Peter Testa of A&E Services Group LLC spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously.

- 3. **Request the Town Council approve and authorize the Vernon Cemetery Commission to purchase a mower for the Vernon Cemetery Department.** (See memorandum dated September 30, 2021 from Jeffrey A. O'Neill, Finance Officer and Treasurer to Daniel A. Champagne, Mayor and Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator relative to same.)

**PROPOSED MOTION**

RESOLVED, THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES AND AUTHORIZES THE VERNON CEMETERY COMMISSION TO PURCHASE A MOWER FOR THE VERNON CEMETERY DEPARTMENT.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, proposed a resolution to approve and authorize the Vernon Cemetery Commission to purchase a mower for the Vernon Cemetery Department. Cemetery Director, Travis Clark, spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously.

- K.) **INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES**  
None

- L.) **ACTION ON ORDINANCES PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED**  
None

- M.) **IDENTIFICATION/ADOPTION OF ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS**

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Bush, moved to add an additional agenda item, New Business #4. Motion carried unanimously.

- N.) **DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL ITEMS AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

- 4. **Request the Town Council approve the request dated October 4, 2021 from the Vernon Housing Authority Executive Director Betsy Soto relative to the waiver of building permit fees for the rehabilitation of an existing two-family dwelling located at 6 Becker Place in the Rockville Historic District.** (See letter from Executive Director Betsy Soto to the Town of Vernon dated October 4, 2021 relative to same.)

**PROPOSED MOTION**

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY WAIVES THE BUILDING PERMIT FEES FOR THE REHABILITATION OF 6 BECKER PLACE, VERNON BY THE VERNON HOUSING AUTHORITY.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Levesque, moved to waive the building permit fees for the rehabilitation of 6 Becker Place by the Vernon Housing Authority. Building Official, Steve Prattson, spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Wendus, made a motion to postpone this item to the next meeting. Discussion ensued.

8:41 PM Recess; 8:45 PM Reconvened

Council Member Motola, and seconder, Council Member Wendus, recinded and pulled the secondary motion. Discussion ensued. Main motion carried unanimously.

**O.) ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

THE TOWN COUNCIL WAIVES THE READING OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING OF **September 21, 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 and approve the minutes of the September 21, 2021 regular Town Council meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

**D.) EXECUTIVE SESSION**

8:45 PM Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, made the following motion to go into Executive Session #1. Motion carried unanimously.

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

8:59 PM Executive Session #1 ended. No action taken.

8:59 PM Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, made the following motion to go into Executive Session #2. Motion carried unanimously.

THE TOWN COUNCIL PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY GIVEN IN CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES 1-200 (6) (D) HEREBY MOVES TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS AND INVITES MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR TO ATTEND.

9:15 PM Executive Session #2 ended.

9:15 PM Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, made the following motion to go into Executive Session #3. Motion carried unanimously.

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

9:22 PM Executive Session #3 ended.

9:22 PM Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, made the following motion to Executive #2:

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY AUTHORIZES MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, TO NEGOTIATE A CONTRACT FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES WITH THE HOCKANUM VALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$69,000.00, AND AUTHORIZES THE SIGNING OF ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS FOR SAME. FURTHER, THE TOWN COUNCIL AGREES THAT IT IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE TOWN TO WAIVE THE SEALED BID REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS PURPOSE.

Motion carried unanimously.

9:23 PM Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Wendus, made the following motion to Executive #3:

RESOLVED, THE TOWN COUNCIL, CONSISTENT WITH THE TOWN CHARTER, CHAPTER 12, SECTION 9, HEREBY WAIVES THE BID PROCEDURE FOR COSTS INVOLVING ENVIROMENTAL CONSULTING SERVICES BY WESTON & SAMPSON, 712 BROOK STREET, SUITE 103, ROCKY HILL, CONNECTICUT. THIS WORK IS ON A TIME AND MATERIAL BASIS NOT TO EXCEED \$17,890 AND IS ASSOCIATED WITH REMEDIATION AND REDEVELOPMENT OF 98 EAST MAIN STREET, AS PART OF THE DECD BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT GRANT AND FURTHER AUTHORIZES THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, TO EXECUTE ON BEHALF OF THE TOWN OF VERNON, ANY INSTRUMENT (S) TO THAT EFFECT.

Motion carried unanimously.

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

None

**Adjourn (9:24 PM)**

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, made a motion to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.

Received:

Approved:

Respectfully Submitted,



Karen C. Daigle  
Recording Secretary