

September 21, 2021

APPROVED MINUTES
VERNON TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
TOWN HALL – 14 PARK PLACE – 3RD FLOOR
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 – 7:30 PM

RECEIVED
VERNON TOWN CLERK
21 DEC -2 AM 11:05

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

A) **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Recited

B) **ROLL CALL:**

Present: Council Members Bill Campbell, Julie Clay, Thomas DiDio, Linda Gessay, Ann Letendre, Maryann Levesque, Brian Motola, Pauline Schaefer, Jim Tedford, Steve Wakefield and Michael Wendus

Absent: Council Member Laura Bush

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 for “Constitution Week - September 17-23, 2021. Dr. Patricia Buxton was present to receive the Proclamation on behalf of the Daughters of the American Revolution.
- Mayor Daniel A. Champagne presented a proclamation for “**National Emergency Preparedness Month**”. Present to receive the proclamation were the Emergency Preparedness and COVID Preparedness Teams.
- Mayor Daniel A. Champagne presented the inductees for the **Volunteer Wall of Honor**
 - Ginny Gingras
 - George Arthur
 - David Kemp
 - Don Bellingham

D.) **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

7:58 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.

8:13 PM Executive Session #1 ended.

8:13 PM Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, made the following motion:

THE TOWN COUNCIL, PURSUANT TO CHAPTER X, SEC. 3 AND CHAPTER XI, SEC. 1,4 AND 10 OF THE VERNON TOWN CHARTER, APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE’S APPOINTMENT OF LT. LUCAS J. GALLANT AS CAPTAIN OF THE VERNON POLICE DEPARTMENT.

Discussion ensued. Mr. Gallant spoke and answered questions. Motion carried unanimously.

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Town Clerk, Karen Daigle, swore in Lucas J. Gallant as Police Captain for the Vernon Police Department.

8:18 PM Recess; 8:36 PM Reconvened

C.) CITIZEN'S FORUM (8:36 PM)

Genaro Gonzalez, 133 West Main Street, spoke regarding Covid-19 and the need for speed bumps on his street.

Citizen's Forum ended at 8:41 PM

D.) EXECUTIVE SESSION (continued)

8:42 PM Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Clay, 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) (A), HEREBY MOVES TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS WITH **VERNON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR'S ASSOCIATION – JULY 1, 2022 TO JUNE 30, 2025** AND INVITES MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, DAWN MASELEK, ASSISTANT TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, DR. JOSEPH P. MACARY, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS AND BOE CHAIRMAN ANNE FISCHER TO ATTEND.

9:18 PM Executive Session #3 ended.

9:18 PM Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Gessay, made the following motion:

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY ACCEPTS THE VERNON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION CONTRACT AS PRESENTED BY SUPERINTENDENT JOSEPH MACARY AND THE VERNON BOARD OF EDUCATION BEGINNING JULY 1, 2022 TO JUNE 30, 2025.

Motion carried unanimously.

F.) PRESENTATIONS BY THE ADMINISTRATION (continued)

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

A moment of silence was taken for the passing of Dick Bowman and Patricia Aldrich, both long-time firefighters and community volunteers.

- A Buy Local Campaign has been launched to highlight Vernon businesses, being carried out by the Economic Development Commission and Department. It includes a business directory and can be accessed at vernonbusinessdirectory.com
- The New England Civil War Museum located in Town Hall will celebrate its reopening on Saturday, October 9th from 10 AM – 4 PM, with a ceremony, living history encampment and museum tours, all happening in Central Park.
- Vernon was on alert and prepared as a tornado touched down in Coventry on September 9th.
- The Town of Vernon is the recipient of the Tolland County Chamber of Commerce "Corporate Citizen of the Year" award for its nationally-recognized COVID-19 vaccination program, the mega clinics at the senior center, many mobile clinics and the "Getting Vax to Business" clinics. Formal recognition is expected in October.

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- The Town of Vernon Cemetery Department is collaborating with Re-Discovering History Inc. to make improvements, including straightening monuments and historical discussions, to the Dobson Cemetery located at 160 Talcottville Road on Saturday, October 2nd from 9 AM to 2 PM. The public is invited to participate in this event.
- Travis Clark, Vernon's Cemetery Superintendent, worked with the Vernon Historical Society to develop a self-guided walking tour of Grove Hill Cemetery. A brochure contains photos and information about historically significant people laid to rest at the cemetery.
- The Parks and Recreation Department is again organizing a drive-thru Trunk or Treat event at Henry Park on Thursday, October 28th from 4:30 – 6:30 PM. Organizations and businesses interested in participating may contact Parks and Rec at 860-870-3520.
- Chiefs Kelley and Eppler, Fire Marshal Wasilewski, EMS Supervisor Gauthier and OEM Director Mike Purcaro bagged groceries at ShopRite to raise awareness and money to feed Vernon's food challenged.
- Vernon Firefighters had an incredible showing at the Ellington Volunteer Fire Department Carnival and Parade this month, winning trophies for best aerial (Tower 141), best specialized apparatus (Squad 141), most firefighters to march, and Best Appearing Company in Coats.
- A pedestrian crossing flasher will be installed on Regan Road where the rails to trails system crosses.
- The Vernon Police Department was honored by Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), including recognition to Officers Vogt, Lisee, Zawadski and St. Pierre for their drunk driving arrests, drug recognition expertise, and commitment to keep the roadways safe in Vernon.
- The Festival of Bands is returning to Rockville High School, with the public being able to see all of the great bands marching and performing on the new turf field. Details are forthcoming.

E.) PUBLIC HEARING

None

G.) ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, made a motion to move the Consent Agenda. Motion 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 1, 2021 included in the Council packet.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES (8) EIGHT PRIOR YEAR TAX REFUNDS TOTALING \$10,578.70 AND (60) SIXTY CURRENT YEAR TAX REFUNDS TOTALING \$13,728.58 AS REFERENCED IN THE MEMORANDUM FROM TERRY HJARNE, COLLECTOR OF REVENUE TO MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR DATED SEPTEMBER 1, 2021.

- C** **2. Request the Town Council approve FY22 budget amendment request #1 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.)

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PROPOSED MOTION

RESOLVED, THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES BUDGET AMENDMENT REQUEST #1 FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022 AS PROVIDED ON THE BUDGET AMENDMENT FORM SUBMITTED BY FINANCE OFFICER AND TREASURER JEFFREY A. O'NEILL.

H.) DISCUSSION OF PULLED CONSENT ITEMS

None

I.) PENDING BUSINESS

None

J.) NEW BUSINESS

1. **Request the Town Council approve the asset disposal for the Data Processing Department.** (See memorandum dated September 14, 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

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE DISPOSAL OF ASSETS FOR THE DATA PROCESSING DEPARTMENT AS DISCLOSED ON THE REQUEST FOR DISPOSAL OF FIXED ASSET FORMS.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, moved to approve the disposal of assets for the Data Processing Department as disclosed on the request for disposal of fixed assets. Motion carried unanimously.

2. **Request the Town Council approve the job description for the position of Town Surveyor.** (A copy of the job description is included for Council review.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL, CONSISTENT WITH THE TOWN OF VERNON PERSONNEL RULES AND REGULATIONS, SECTION 4.1(B) ENTITLED "JOB DESCRIPTIONS", HEREBY ADOPTS THE JOB DESCRIPTION OF **TOWN SURVEYOR** AS PRESENTED.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, moved to approve the job description of Town Surveyor as presented. Town Engineer, Dave Smith, and Assistant Town Administrator, Dawn Maselek, spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously.

9:48 PM Council Member Motola left the table and returned.

3. **Request the Town Council approves an updated Municipal Dam Repairs Grant from the State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection for Walker's Reservoir in the amount of \$97,334.74. Further, the Town Council re-designates unused funding originally approved for the now completed Valley Falls Dam Project.** (See memorandum from Jeffrey A. O'Neill, Finance Officer and Treasurer dated September 9, 2021 to Mayor Daniel A. Champagne and Town Administrator Michael J. Purcaro).

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PROPOSED MOTION #1

RESOLVED, THE VERNON TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE MUNICIPAL DAM REPAIRS GRANT FOR WALKER'S RESERVOIR IN THE AMOUNT OF \$97,334.74.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, moved to approve the municipal dam repairs grant for Walker's Reservoir in the amount of \$97,334.74. Town Engineer, Dave Smith, and Finance Director, Jeff O'Neill, spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously.

9:57 PM Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Motola, moved to extend curfew to the end of business. Motion carried unanimously.

PROPOSED MOTION #2

RESOLVED, THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE RE-DESIGNATION OF UNUSED FUNDS ORIGINALLY ALLOCATED FOR DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION COSTS FOR THE VALLEY FALLS DAM PROJECT. SAID AMOUNTS ARE \$12,000.00 AND \$97,270.21 AS DESCRIBED IN THE MEMORANDUM FROM JEFFREY A. O'NEILL, FINANCE OFFICER AND TREASURER.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Wendus, moved to approve the redesignation of unused funds originally allocated for design and construction costs for the Valley Falls dam project, in the amounts are \$12,000 and \$97,270.21 as described in said memo. Motion carried unanimously.

4. **Request Town Council approve FY22 budget amendment request #2 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 REQUEST #2 FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022 AS PROVIDED ON THE BUDGET AMENDMENT FORM SUBMITTED BY FINANCE OFFICER AND TREASURER JEFFREY A. O'NEILL.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, moved to approve budget amendment request #2 for the fiscal year 2021-2022 as provided on the budget amendment form. Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, amended the motion to lower the amount to \$10,000 as the correct amount. Public Works Director, Dwight Ryniewicz, spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued. Motion, as amended, carried unanimously.

K.) **INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES**
None

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

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M.) IDENTIFICATION/ADOPTION OF ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, moved to add an additional agenda item, Executive Session #4. Motion carried unanimously.

D.) EXECUTIVE SESSION (continued)

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.

10:35 PM Executive Session #2 ended.

No action taken.

10:35 PM Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Schaefer, made the following motion to go into Executive Session #4. 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.

10:50 PM Executive Session #4 ended.

10:50 PM Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Clay, made the following motion to Executive #4:

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY AUTHORIZES MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR TO NEGOTIATE A CONTRACT WITH THE SUCCESSFUL BIDDER AND FURTHER APPROPRIATES FUNDING FROM THE GENERAL FUND IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$15,000.00. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR MICHAEL J. PURCARO IS AUTHORIZED TO SIGN ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS RELATIVE TO SAME.

Motion carried unanimously.

N.) DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL ITEMS AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

See above Execution Session #4

O.) ADOPTION OF MINUTES

THE TOWN COUNCIL WAIVES THE READING OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING OF **August 17, 2021** AND THAT MINUTES OF SAID MEETING BE APPROVED.

Council Member Wakefield, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made a motion to waive the reading of and approve the minutes of the August 17, 2021 regular Town Council meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

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

1. Monthly Report – July, 2021 for the Vernon Police Department as submitted by Chief John Kelley.
2. Monthly Report – August, 2021 for the Town Clerk's Office as submitted by Karen Daigle, Town Clerk.
3. Monthly Report – August, 2021 for the Vernon Police Department as submitted by Chief John Kelley.
4. Memorandum dated August 13, 2021 from Terry Hjarne, Collector of Revenue to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator relative to a Waiver of Interest per § 12-145.

Adjourn (10:52 PM)

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

Received: September 28, 2021

Approved: October 5, 2021

Respectfully Submitted,



Karen C. Daigle
Recording Secretary