

January 17, 2023

APPROVED MINUTES
VERNON TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
TOWN HALL – 14 PARK PLACE – 3RD FLOOR
TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2023 – 7:30 PM

RECEIVED
VERNON TOWN CLERK
23 FEB -8 AM 8:19

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, Linda Gessay, Ann Letendre, Maryann Levesque, Brian Motola, Ariana Nieves-Matias, John O'Connell, Teri-Lynn Rogers, and Jim Tedford

Absent: Council Members Julie Clay and Michael Wendus

Entered During Meeting:

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

C.) CITIZEN CITATIONS AND AWARDS

None

D.) CITIZEN'S FORUM

Genaro Gonzalez, West Main Street, spoke on driving and laws.

7:37 PM Citizen's Forum ended.

F.) PUBLIC HEARING

None

G.) PRESENTATIONS BY THE ADMINISTRATION

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

- The Vernon Housing Authority submitted their FY 2023 PILOT check in the amount of \$93,162.00.
- Thank you to Sally Frobisher of the Balukas Living Trust for the \$50.00 donation in thanks for the wonderful July in the Sky fireworks and the outstanding Winterfest display in Henry Park.
- The Vernon Office of Emergency and Risk Management is hosting a drone pilot certification class on February 14th and 15th for multiple town departments, the Board of Education, CERT as well as neighboring municipalities.
- The three remaining Design Review Members are on the agenda for appointment to the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Cemetery Commission.
- Be advised that the Town Clerk's Office is installing a new system during the week of January 23rd. The office will be closed on the 23rd and until noon on the 24th.
- Thank you to the Fire Chief and Fire Marshal for demonstrating new CPR equipment.

H.) ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Bush, made a motion to move the Consent Agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

- C** 1. Request the Town Council approve the tax refunds for prior and current year taxes as outlined in the memorandum from Terry Hjarne, Collector of Revenue. (See memorandum dated January 3, 2023 to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator from Terry Hjarne, Collector of Revenue relative to same.)

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PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES TWO (2) REFUNDS FOR PRIOR YEAR TOTALING \$469.81 AND SEVENTEEN (17) CURRENT YEAR TOTALING \$3622.05 AS OUTLINED IN THE MEMORANDUM FROM TERRY HJARNE, COLLECTOR OF REVENUE TO MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR DATED JANUARY 3, 2023.

- C 2.** Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of Forrest Wilks, (R), 8 North Park Street, Vernon, Connecticut as a regular member of the Energy Improvement District Board, said term to commence on January 18, 2023 and expires on December 31, 2027. (A copy of Mr. Wilks resume is included for Council review.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO THE TOWN OF VERNON ORDINANCE # 292 AND TOWN CODE SECTION 3(A), THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF FORREST WILKS, (R), 8 NORTH PARK STREET, VERNON, CONNECTICUT AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE ENERGY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT BOARD, SAID TERM TO BEGIN JANUARY 18, 2023 AND EXPIRES ON DECEMBER 31, 2027.

- C 3.** Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of Carolyn M. Futtner, (D), 33 Montauk Drive, Vernon, Connecticut as a regular member of the Inland Wetlands Regulatory Commission, said term to commence on January 18, 2023 and expires on December 31, 2025. (Ms. Futtner is moving from alternate to regular member.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO CHARTER CHAPTER VIII, SEC. 8, THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF CAROLYN M. FUTTNER, (D), 33 MONTAUK DRIVE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE INLAND WETLANDS REGULATORY COMMISSION, SAID TERM TO COMMENCE ON JANUARY 18, 2023 AND EXPIRES ON DECEMBER 31, 2025.

- C 4.** Request the Town Council amend the term start date of Michael J. Purcaro's recent reappointment to the Bolton Lakes Regional Water Pollution Control Authority from January 1, 2022 to January 1, 2023. (This change is corrected in the motion below.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO ORDINANCE NO. 242 THE VERNON TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S RE-APPOINTMENT OF MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, 14 PARK PLACE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT AS AN ALTERNATE DIRECTOR TO THE BOLTON LAKES REGIONAL WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY FOR A TERM BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2023 AND EXPIRES ON DECEMBER 31, 2024.

- C 5.** Request the Town Council approves Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of Eva Perrina, (U), 73 Riverside Drive, Vernon, Connecticut as an alternate member of the Planning and Zoning Commission, said term to commence on January 18, 2023 and expires December 31, 2027. (A copy of Ms. Perrina's resume is included for Council review. Ms. Perrina is moving from Design Review to Planning and Zoning.)

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PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO THE VERNON TOWN CHARTER, CHAPTER VIII, SEC. 1 & 6, AND CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES SEC. 8-4a & b, THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF EVA PERRINA, (U), 73 RIVERSIDE DRIVE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT, TO ALTERNATE MEMBER OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION FOR A TERM COMMENCING ON JANUARY 18, 2023 AND EXPIRES DECEMBER 31, 2027.

- C 6.** Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of Steven H. Ransom, Jr., (R), 23 Olive Lane, Vernon, Connecticut as an alternate member of the Planning and Zoning Commission, said term to commence on January 18, 2023 and expires on December 31, 2027. (A copy of Mr. Ransom's resume is included for Council review. Mr. Ransom is moving from Design Review to Planning and Zoning.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO THE VERNON TOWN CHARTER, CHAPTER VIII, SEC. 1 & 6, AND CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES SEC. 8-4a & b, THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF STEVEN H. RANSOM, (R), 23 OLIVE LANE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT, TO ALTERNATE MEMBER OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION FOR A TERM COMMENCING ON JANUARY 18, 2023 AND EXPIRES DECEMBER 31, 2027.

- C 7.** Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of William Nicholson, (R), 86 Huntington Drive, Vernon, Connecticut as regular member of the Planning and Zoning Commission, said term commences January 18, 2023 and expires December 31, 2025. (A copy of Mr. Nicholson's resume is included for Council review. Mr. Nicholson is presently an alternate and is moving to regular member.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO CHARTER CHAPTER VIII, SEC. 1,6 & 11 DATED JANUARY 1, 1985; C.G.S. §8-4A&B, THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF WILLIAM NICHOLSON, (R), 86 HUNTINGTON DRIVE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION FOR A TERM TO COMMENCE ON JANUARY 18, 2023 AND EXPIRES DECEMBER 31, 2025.

- C 8.** Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of William G. Graugard, (R), 54 Lake Street, Vernon, Connecticut as a regular member of the Cemetery Commission, said term to commence on January 18, 2023 and expires on December 31, 2025. (A copy of Mr. Graugard's resume is included for Council review.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO C.G.S. §19A-296; CHARTER CHAPTER VIII, SECTION 10, THE TOWN COUNCIL APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF WILLIAM G. GRAUGARD, (R), 54 LAKE STREET, VERNON, CONNECTICUT AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE CEMETERY COMMISSION, SAID TERM TO COMMENCE ON JANUARY 18, 2023 AND EXPIRES ON DECEMBER 31, 2025.

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- C 9. Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of Jennifer Holt, (D), 30 King Street, Vernon, Connecticut as a regular member of the Cemetery Commission, said term to commence on January 18, 2023 and expires on December 31, 2025.** (A copy of Ms. Holt's resume is included for Council review. Ms. Holt is moving from Design Review to the Cemetery Commission.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO C.G.S. §19A-296; CHARTER CHAPTER VIII, SECTION 10, THE TOWN COUNCIL APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF JENNIFER HOLT, (D), 30 KING STREET, VERNON, CONNECTICUT AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE CEMETERY COMMISSION, SAID TERM TO COMMENCE ON JANUARY 18, 2023 AND EXPIRES ON DECEMBER 31, 2025.

I.) DISCUSSION OF PULLED CONSENT ITEMS

None

J.) PENDING BUSINESS

None

K.) NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Request the Town Council approve the Vernon Democratic Town Committee nomination of Paul Grabowski to fill the vacant seat on the Board of Education created by the resignation of Kevin Brown.** (See letter dated January 9, 2023 from Chairwoman Nicole Bornhorst to Mayor Daniel A. Champagne confirming the party's endorsement of Mr. Grabowski. It should be noted that Mr. Grabowski's resume is included for Council review.)

PROPOSED MOTION

RESOLVED, THE VERNON TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY ENDORSES THE NOMINATION OF PAUL GRABOWSKI, (D), 40 CREST DRIVE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT TO REPLACE KEVIN BROWN ON THE VERNON BOARD OF EDUCATION, SAID TERM TO COMMENCE ON JANUARY 18, 2023 AND EXPIRES NOVEMBER 13, 2023.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, proposed a resolution to endorse the nomination of Paul Grabowski to the Board of Education, replacing Kevin Brown, for a term commencing January 18, 2023 and expiring November 13, 2023. Mr. Grabowski spoke. Discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously.

- 2. Request the Town Council approve the grant application by the Youth Service Bureau to receive funding for the 2023 Summer Youth Employment & Learning Program.** (See memorandum dated December 27, 2022 from Michelle Hill, Youth Service Director to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator relative to same.)

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PROPOSED MOTION

RESOLVED, THE VERNON TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE GRANT APPLICATION BY THE VERNON YOUTH SERVICE BUREAU FOR FUNDING THROUGH THE 2023 SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT & LEARNING PROGRAM AND FURTHER AUTHORIZES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE OR HIS DESIGNEE TO SIGN ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS FOR SAME.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Bush, made a motion to approve the grant application by the Vernon Youth Service Bureau for funding through the 2023 Summer Youth Employment & Learning program and further authorizes Mayor Daniel A. Champagne or his designee to sign any and all documents for same. Michelle Hill, Youth Services Director, spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously.

3. **Request the Town Council approve the resolution relative to the rehabilitation and restoration of the Fox Hill Tower.** (See memorandum from Nichole Greco, Project Coordinator dated January 10, 2023 to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator relative to same. Also included is the resolution described below.)

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, THE VERNON TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE RESOLUTION ATTACHED FOR THE ***GRANT CONTRACT UNDER THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT, DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FOR A \$2,500,000 GRANT FOR THE REHABILITATION AND RESTORATION OF THE FOX HILL MEMORIAL TOWER LOCATED AT HENRY PARK.***

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member O'Connell, proposed a resolution to approve the resolution for the grant contract under the State of Connecticut, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection for a \$2,500,000 Grant for the Rehabilitation and Restoration of the Fox Hill Memorial Tower located at Henry Park. Mayor Champagne spoke. Motion carried unanimously.

4. **Request the Town Council consider acceptance of Tunnel View Estates.** (See attached memorandum from Shaun Gately, Director of Development Services to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator dated January 10, 2023 and memorandum from Ashley Stephens, Town Planner to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator dated January 9, 2023. Also included is a memorandum from David Smith, Vernon Town Engineer to Shaun Gately, Director of Development dated December 20, 2022)

PROPOSED MOTION

RESOLVED, THE VERNON TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY ACCEPTS THE ROAD AND ACCOMPANYING DEEDS AND EASEMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE 1999 TUNNEL VIEW ESTATES SUBDIVISION. FURTHER, THE TOWN COUNCIL AUTHORIZES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE OR HIS DESIGNEE TO SIGN ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS FOR SAME.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, proposed a resolution to accept the roads and accompanying deeds and easements associated with the 1999 Tunnel View Estates Subdivision, further authorizing Mayor Daniel A. Champagne or his designee to sign any and all documents for same. Mayor Champagne and Shaun Gately, Director of Development Services, spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously.

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5. Request the Town Council graciously accept the donation from the Sally Frobisher Balukas Living Trust in thanks for the wonderful Fireworks and Holiday Light Display at Henry Park provided by the Town of Vernon. (See the thank you note from Sally Balukas.)

PROPOSED MOTION

RESOLVED, THE VERNON TOWN COUNCIL GRACIOUSLY ACCEPTS THE GIFT OF \$50.00 FROM THE FROBISHER BALUKAS LIVING TRUST IN THANKS FOR THE HOLIDAY DISPLAY AND FIREWORKS PROVIDED BY THE TOWN OF VERNON.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Tedford, proposed a resolution to accept the gift of \$50.00 from the Frobisher Balukas Living Trust in thanks for the holiday display and fireworks provided by the Town of Vernon. Mayor Champagne spoke. Discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously.

M.) ACTION ON ORDINANCES PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED

None

N.) IDENTIFICATION/ADOPTION OF ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS

None

O.) DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL ITEMS AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

None

P.) ADOPTION OF MINUTES

THE TOWN COUNCIL WAIVES THE READING OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING OF **DECEMBER 20, 2022** AND THAT MINUTES OF SAID MEETING BE APPROVED.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Rogers, made a motion to waive the reading of and approve the minutes of the December 20, 2022 regular Town Council meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

E.) EXECUTIVE SESSION (Taken Out of Order)

8:00 PM Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made the following motion to go into Executive Session #1. Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION #1

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.

8:15 PM Executive Session #1 ended.

8:15 PM Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made the following motion to go into Executive Session #2. Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION #2

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THE TOWN COUNCIL PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY GIVEN IN CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES 1-200 (6) (B) HEREBY MOVES TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING REAL ESTATE TAX APPEAL: *Walgreens Eastern Co., Inc. v Town of Vernon et al.*, AND INVITES MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, TOWN ATTORNEY LOU SPADACCINI AND TOWN OF VERNON ASSESSOR DAVID WHEELER TO ATTEND.

8:26 PM Executive Session #2 ended.

EXECUTIVE SESSION #3

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.

Mayor Daniel Champagne pulled Executive Session #3.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member O'Connell, made the following motion to Executive Session #1:

Motion #1

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE APPROPRIATION OF ARPA FUNDING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$12,869.00 FOR THE PURCHASE OF SIX (6) SOCCER GOALS FROM CREATIVE RECREATION, AND FURTHER AUTHORIZES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE OR HIS DESIGNEE TO SIGN ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS FOR SAME.

Motion carried unanimously.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Bush, made the following motion to Executive Session #1:

Motion #2

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE APPROPRIATION OF ARPA FUNDING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$14,982.00 FOR THE PURCHASE OF EIGHT (8) PLAYER BENCHES FROM CREATIVE RECREATION, AND FURTHER AUTHORIZES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE OR HIS DESIGNEE TO SIGN ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS FOR SAME.

Motion carried unanimously.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made the following motion to Executive Session #1:

Motion #3

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE APPROPRIATION FOR A BUILDING PROJECT USING ARPA FUNDS NOT TO EXCEED \$2,000,000.00.

Motion carried unanimously.

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Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made the following motion to Executive Session #2:

THE TOWN COUNCIL AUTHORIZES THE TOWN ATTORNEY LOU SPADACCINI TO SETTLE A TAX APPEAL CAPTIONED **WALGREENS EASTERN CO., INC. V TOWN OF VERNON ET AL.**, FOR TAXES ON THE GRAND LIST OF OCTOBER 1, 2021 FOR THE ASSESSED VALUE OF \$2,919,000.00 OR THE 100 % FAIR MARKET VALUE OF \$4,170,000.00 AND TO ADJUST ASSESSMENT AND TAX BILL FOR THE 2021 GRAND LIST, FOR THE PROPERTY KNOWN AS **529 TALCOTTVILLE ROAD, VERNON, CONNECTICUT.**

Motion carried unanimously.

Q.) INFORMATIONAL ITEMS, PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, CORRESPONDENCE, REPORTS, ETC. NOT REQUIRING ACTION
None

R.) Adjourn (8:28 PM)

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Bush, made a motion to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.

Received: January 24, 2023

Approved: February 7, 2023



Karen C. Daigle
Recording Secretary