

February 7, 2023

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

RECEIVED
VERNON TOWN CLERK
23 FEB 28 PH 2:00

Deputy Mayor Brian Motola 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, Linda Gessay, Ann Letendre, Maryann Levesque, Brian Motola, John O'Connell, Teri-Lynn Rogers, Jim Tedford and Michael Wendus

Absent: Council Members Ariana Nieves-Matias

Entered During Meeting:

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

C.) **CITIZEN CITATIONS AND AWARDS**

None

Town Administrator, Michael Purcaro, introduced Katie McGray, the Town of Vernon's new EMS Medical Officer. Fire Marshal, Dan Wasilewski, and Fire Chief, Steve Eppler spoke, with Katie McGray offering a few words.

D.) **CITIZEN'S FORUM**

Genaro Gonzalez, West Main Street, spoke on common and UCC laws.

Teri Lynn Rogers, 26 White Street, spoke on the Energy Improvement District Board and Sustainable CT. Town Administrator, Michael Purcaro, offered information on certification of Sustainable CT.

7:48 PM Citizen's Forum ended.

F.) **PUBLIC HEARING**

None

G.) **PRESENTATIONS BY THE ADMINISTRATION**

None

H.) **ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA**

Council Member Bush, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made a motion to move the Consent Agenda. Council Member Motola pulled Consent #1. Motion to approve C#2 – C#7 carried unanimously.

- C 2. Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of Joseph R. Miller, (R), 27 Tallwood Drive, Vernon, Connecticut as a regular member of Human Services Advisory Commission, said term to commence on February 8, 2023 and expires on June 30, 2024.** (A copy of Mr. Miller's resume is included for Council review.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO CHARTER CHAPTER XV, SEC. 3, 05-02-1989 TOWN RESOLUTION VOL. 24, PAGE 382 AS AMENDED /VOL. 37 PAGE 266 AND TOWN COUNCIL RESOLUTION DATED 02-19-2002, THE TOWN COUNCIL

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HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF JOSEPH R. MILLER, (R) 27 TALLWOOD DRIVE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT, AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMISSION FOR A TERM BEGINNING FEBRUARY 8, 2023 AND EXPIRES ON JUNE 30, 2024.

- C 3.** Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of Nichole Greco, (U), 66 Vernwood Drive, Vernon, Connecticut as a regular member of the Risk Management Advisory Committee, said term to commence on February 8, 2023 and expires August 31, 2023. (A copy of Ms. Greco's resume is included for Council review. It should be noted that Ms. Greco is completing the unexpired term of William Gilson.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO THE TOWN COUNCIL RESOLUTION DATED NOVEMBER 18, 1986 AND TOWN CHARTER CHAPTER XV, SECTION 3, THE TOWN COUNCIL APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF NICHOLE GRECO, (U), 66 VERNWOOD DRIVE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE RISK MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE, SAID TERM TO COMMENCE ON FEBRUARY 8, 2023 AND ENDS AUGUST 31, 2023.

- C 4.** Request the Town Council approves Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's reappointment of Robert O'Gara, (R), 22 Donnell Road, Vernon, Connecticut as a regular member of the Vernon Traffic Authority, said term to commence February 21, 2023 and expires on February 20, 2026. (A copy of Mr. O'Gara's resume is included for Council review.)

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 ROBERT O'GARA, 22 DONNELL DRIVE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT, AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE TRAFFIC AUTHORITY, SAID TERM TO COMMENCE ON FEBRUARY 21, 2023 AND EXPIRES FEBRUARY 20, 2026.

- C 5.** Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's reappointment of Dwight Ryniewicz, Director of Public Works, 375 Hartford Turnpike, Vernon, Connecticut as a regular member of the Vernon Traffic Authority, said term to commence on February 21, 2023 and expires on February 20, 2026. (Mr. Ryniewicz is a department head and therefore no resume is 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 DWIGHT RYNIWICZ, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, 375 HARTFORD TURNPIKE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT, AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE TRAFFIC AUTHORITY. SAID TERM TO COMMENCE ON FEBRUARY 21, 2023 AND FEBRUARY 20, 2026.

- C 6.** Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's reappointment of Susan Bannon, (I), 9 Hillside Manor Avenue, Vernon, Connecticut as a regular member of the Vernon Housing Authority, said term to commence on March 1, 2023 and expires on February 28, 2028. (A copy of Ms. Bannon's resume is included for Council review.)

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PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 8, SECTION 5 OF THE VERNON TOWN CHARTER THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S REAPPOINTMENT OF SUSAN BANNON, (I), 9 HILLSIDE MANOR AVENUE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE VERNON HOUSING AUTHORITY, SAID TERM TO BEGIN MARCH 1, 2023 AND FEBRUARY 28, 2028.

- C 7.** **Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of David Herrmann, (D), 521 Bolton Road, Vernon, Connecticut as an alternate member of the Board of Ethics, said term to commence February 8, 2023 and expires November 30, 2027.** (A copy of Mr. Herrmann's resume is included for Council review.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO ORDINANCE # 173, TOWN CODE SEC. 2-91 - 2- 98; THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF DAVID HERRMANN, (D), 521 BOLTON ROAD, VERNON, CONNECTICUT AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF ETHICS, SAID TERM TO COMMENCE ON FEBRUARY 8, 2023 AND ENDS ON NOVEMBER 30, 2027.

I.) DISCUSSION OF PULLED CONSENT ITEMS

- 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 27, 2023 to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator from Terry Hjarne, Collector of Revenue relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THREE (3) REFUNDS FOR PRIOR YEAR TOTALING \$1120.03 AND SIXTEEN (16) CURRENT YEAR TOTALING \$8076.13 AS OUTLINED IN THE MEMORANDUM FROM TERRY HJARNE, COLLECTOR OF REVENUE TO MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR DATED JANUARY 27 2023.

Council Member Bush, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made a motion to approve 3 refunds for prior year totaling \$1120.03 and 16 current year totaling \$8076.13. Motion carried with 10 in favor, 0 opposed and 1 abstention, Council Member Motola.

J.) PENDING BUSINESS
None

K.) NEW BUSINESS

- 1.** **Request the Town Council authorize the Vernon Fire Department to submit an application for and receive the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Assistance for Firefighters Grant for 2022.** (See the memorandum dated February 2, 2023 from Nichole Greco, Projects Coordinator to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator relative to same.)

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THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY AUTHORIZES THE VERNON FIRE DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR AND RECEIVE THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY, ASSISTANCE FOR FIREFIGHTERS GRANT FOR 2022, AND FURTHER THE TOWN COUNCIL AUTHORIZES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE OR HIS DESIGNEE TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS FOR SAME.

Council Member Bush, seconded by Council Member O'Connell, made a motion authorizing the Vernon Fire Department to apply for and receive the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Assistance for Firefighters Grant for 2022. Town Administrator, Michael Purcaro, spoke to amend the amount of the Town's share to \$4,496.60. Fire Marshal, Dan Wasilewski, and Fire Chief, Steve Eppler, spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously.

2. **Request the Town Council approve the appointment of the Auditor.** (See memorandum from Jeffrey A. O'Neill, Finance Officer & Treasurer dated January 25, 2023 relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

RESOLVED, THE VERNON TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPOINTS THE FIRM OF MAHONEY SABOL & COMPANY OF 180 GLASTONBURY BOULEVARD, GLASTONBURY, CONNECTICUT AS AUDITORS TO AUDIT THE BOOKS AND ACCOUNTS OF THE TOWN OF VERNON FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2023 AND TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE CONTRACT #2007 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$83,300 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2023 AUDIT.

Council Member Bush, seconded by Council Member Tedford, proposed a resolution to appoint the firm of Mahoney Sabol & Company as auditors to audit the books and accounts of the Town of Vernon for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023 and to execute Contract #2007 in the amount of \$83,300 for the fiscal year 2023 audit. Finance Officer and Treasurer, Jeffrey O'Neill, spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously.

3. **Request the Town Council graciously accept the donations received from the Lyle and Grossman Families for the Ambulance Fund.** (See notes and checks from the families.)

PROPOSED MOTION

RESOLVED, THE VERNON TOWN COUNCIL GRACIOUSLY ACCEPTS THE DONATIONS RECEIVED FROM THE LYLE AND GROSSMAN FAMILIES FOR THE AMBULANCE FUND TOTTALLING \$115.00.

Council Member Bush, seconded by Council Member Tedford, proposed a resolution to graciously accept the donations received from the Lyle and Grossman families for the ambulance fund totaling \$115.00. Fire Chief, Steve Eppler, spoke. Discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously.

4. **Request the Town Council approve the 2023-2024 Budget Meeting Dates.**
(See memorandum from Diane Wheelock, Executive Assistant to Mayor Daniel A. Champagne and the Vernon Town Council dated January 20, 2023 relative to same.)

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PROPOSED MOTION #1

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY SCHEDULES THE FOLLOWING BUDGET MEETING DATES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024 BUDGET DELIBERATIONS:

MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2023; THURSDAY, MARCH 23, 2023; MONDAY, MARCH 27, 2023; THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2023 AND MONDAY, APRIL 3, 2023 WITH A START TIME OF 7:00 P.M., AND SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 2023 WITH A START TIME OF 9:00 AM. PUBLIC HEARINGS WILL BE SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 2023 WITH A START TIME OF 9:05 AM AND THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2023 WITH A START TIME OF 7:05 PM, TO HEAR COMMENT AND ANSWER QUESTIONS RELATIVE TO THE 2023-2024 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.

Council Member Bush, seconded by Council Member Tedford, made a motion to schedule the budget meetings dated for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 as stated in Proposed Motion #1 above. Motion carried unanimously.

PROPOSED MOTION #2

PURSUANT TO CHARTER, CHAPTER IV "ANNUAL TOWN MEETING", THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY SCHEDULES, TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2023 AS THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING AND FINAL PUBLIC HEARING TO HEAR COMMENT AND ANSWER QUESTIONS RELATIVE TO THE FY 2023-2024 TOWN OF VERNON BUDGET. THE APRIL 25, 2023 PUBLIC HEARING AND ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE ROCKVILLE HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM, LOVELAND HILL ROAD, VERNON, CONNECTICUT BEGINNING AT 7:00 PM.

Council Member Bush, seconded by Council Member Tedford, made a motion to schedule the Annual Town Meeting and final public hearing to hear comment and answer questions relative to the FY 2023-2024 Town of Vernon budget for April 25, 2023, 7:00 PM at Rockville High School. 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 **January 17, 2023** AND THAT MINUTES OF SAID MEETING BE APPROVED.

Council Member Bush, seconded by Council Member Rogers, made a motion to waive the reading of and approve the minutes of the January 17, 2023 regular Town Council meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

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E.) EXECUTIVE SESSION (Taken Out of Order)

8:18 PM Council Member Bush, 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, AND DAWN MASELEK, ASSISTANT TOWN AMINISTRATOR, TO ATTEND.

8:29 PM Executive Session #1 ended.

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

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE LEGAL REPRESENTATION BY ATTORNEY RYAN O'DONNELL WITH THE LAW FIRM PULLMAN AND COMLEY, LLC. FOR THE TOWN OF VERNON AS PRESENTED AND FURTHER AUTHORIZES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE OR HIS DESIGNEE TO SIGN ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS FOR SAME.

Motion carried unanimously.

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

1. Thank you note from Stan Zaremba, Ken Provencher, George and Elaine Dwyer and Rich Uhlman thanking the Cemetery staff for their incredible job with the town cemeteries.
2. Memorandum dated January 15, 2023 from Jeffrey A. O'Neill, Finance Officer and Treasurer announcing the Finance Department's Award - GFOA Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.

R.) Adjourn (8:30 PM)

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

Received: February 13, 2023

Approved: February 21, 2023



Karen C. Daigle
Recording Secretary