

February 21, 2023

APPROVED MINUTES
VERNON TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
TOWN HALL – 14 PARK PLACE – 3RD FLOOR
VERNON, CONNECTICUT
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2023
7:30 P.M.

RECEIVED
VERNON TOWN CLERK
23 MAR -8 AM 10: 02

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

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, Ariana Nieves-Matias, John O'Connell, Teri-Lynn Rogers, Jim Tedford, Michael Wendus

Absent: None

Entered During Meeting: None

Also Present: Mayor Daniel Champagne, Town Administrator Michael Purcaro, Recording Secretary Meriline Sarkar

C.) Citizen citations and awards: None

D.) CITIZENS FORUM

Genaro Gonzalez, West Main Street, spoke on Obama care and legal execution.

Josh Prignano, Troop Historian, 126 Merline Road, Vernon and Jonah Rodriguez, Troop SPL, 55 North Park Street, Ellington, Troop 22, spoke on strengthening Boy's Scout in Vernon through recruitment, community service project, and fundraising. They provided their website address for further information. It is www.t22.org

Council Member Maryann Levesque reiterated that all the Council Members are volunteers not paid employees. They volunteer because they are passionate about the Town of Vernon.

Council Member Teri-Lynn Rogers spoke on getting access to the current information and events. Mayor Daniel Champagne spoke on a non-emergency alert system and the Town website.

Citizen's forum ended at 7:45pm.

F.) PUBLIC HEARING: None

G.) PRESENTATIONS BY THE ADMINISTRATION

Mayor Daniel A. Champagne updated the Town Council on various topics.

- There is a joint meeting being planned for March 7, 2023 from 6-7 PM to provide and update on the Miracle League Fields planned for the Northeast School property. This will be a joint meeting between the BOE and Council held here in the Town Council Chambers. More information to come.
- Superintendent Dr. Joseph Macary has been recognized as Outstanding School Superintendent by UCONN'S School of Education. Dr. Macary has been Vernon's

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Superintendent since 2015 and has many accomplishments to his credit. Congratulations to Dr. Macary!

- A new business has joined the West Main Street business district "Hyzer Disc Sports." Hyzer Disc Sports carries everything you need to play Disc Golf here in Vernon and our surrounding towns.
- Budget agendas are being prepared now and will be distributed with the budget books for Council members and posted for the public on the website. Budget meeting dates are on the Town's website. Books will be delivered by March 15th and our first meeting is Saturday, March 18, 2023 at 9:00 AM here in the Chambers.

H.) **ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA:** Council Member Motola moved the Consent Agenda as written, seconded by Council Member Clay, and the motion carried unanimously

- C 1. **Request the Town Council approve the tax refunds for current year taxes as outlined in the memorandum from Terry Hjarne, Collector of Revenue.** (See memorandum dated February 9, 2023 to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator from Terry Hjarne, Collector of Revenue relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES ELEVEN (11) CURRENT YEAR TOTALING \$15,471.43 AS OUTLINED IN THE MEMORANDUM FROM TERRY HJARNE, COLLECTOR OF REVENUE TO MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR DATED FEBRUARY 9, 2023.

- C 2. **Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of Geoffrey Siedor, (U), 27 Gardner Road, Vernon, Connecticut as an alternate member of the Inland Wetland Regulatory Commission, said term to commence on February 22, 2023 and expires on June 30, 2025.** (Mr. Siedor is completing the unexpired term of Carolyn M. Futtner. A copy of Mr. Siedor's resume is included for Council review.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO CHARTER CHAPTER VIII, SEC. 8, THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF GEOFFREY SIEDOR, (U), 27 GARDNER ROAD, VERNON, CONNECTICUT AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER OF THE INLAND WETLANDS REGULATORY COMMISSION, SAID TERM TO COMMENCE ON FEBRUARY 22, 2023 AND EXPIRES ON JUNE 30, 2025.

I.) **DISCUSSION OF PULLED CONSENT ITEMS:** None

J.) **PENDING BUSINESS:** None

K.) **NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Request the Town Council graciously accept the donation received from the Rockville Bank Community Foundation in the amount of \$15,000.00 for the Tri-Town Fuel Bank.** (See letter dated December 24, 2022 from the Rockville Bank Community Foundation, Inc. to Matt Hellman, Director of the Vernon Social Services Department, copy of the check for \$15,000.00 and the Acknowledgement Form and memorandum from Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator to the Rockville Bank Community Foundation dated February 16, 2023 for same.)

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PROPOSED MOTION

RESOLVED, THE VERNON TOWN COUNCIL GRACIOUSLY ACCEPTS THE GIFT OF \$15,000.00 FROM THE ROCKVILLE BANK COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR THE TRI-TOWN FUEL BANK AND FURTHER AUTHORIZE MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE OR HIS DESIGNEE TO SUBMIT THE REQUESTED ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM FOR SAME.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member O'Connell, made a motion to accept the gift of \$15,000.00 from the Rockville Bank Community Foundation for the Tri-Town Fuel Bank and further authorize Mayor Daniel A. Champagne or his designee to submit the requested acknowledgement form for same. Discussion ensued. The motion carried unanimously.

2. **Request the Town Council consider the acceptance of 686 Dart Hill Road from the Hockanum River Linear Park of Vernon, Inc., as presented.** (See letter from the Vernon Greenway Volunteers, Inc., dated January 21, 2023 to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator, memorandum dated January 31, 2023 to Ashley Stephens, Town Planner and the Planning and Zoning Commission requesting an 8-24 review and memorandum dated February 6, 2023 from Ashley Stephens, Town Planner to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator with the 8-24 response for same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

RESOLVED, THE VERNON TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY ACCEPTS THE PARCEL KNOWN AS 686 DART HILL ROAD, VERNON, CONNECTICUT FROM THE HOCKANUM RIVER LINEAR PARK OF VERNON, INC., 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, made a motion to accept the parcel known as 686 Dart Hill Road, Vernon, Connecticut from the Hockanum River Linear Park of Vernon, Inc., further the Town Council authorizes Mayor Daniel A. Champagne or his designee to sign any and all documents for same. Discussion ensued. The motion carried unanimously.

3. **Requesting approval of the transfer of Chamberlin Street to the Vernon Housing Authority and perpetual easement access by the Gesang and Declamation Club, Inc.** (See Quit Claim Deed, Mutual Access Agreement and map attached.)

PROPOSED MOTION

RESOLVED, THE VERNON TOWN COUNCIL APPROVES THE QUIT CLAIM DEED AND MUTUAL ACCESS AGREEMENT AS PRESENTED, 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 Rogers, made a motion to approve the Quit Claim Deed and Mutual Access Agreement as presented, and further authorizes Mayor Daniel A. Champagne or his designee to sign any and all documents for same. Mayor Daniel A. Champagne gave updates on the property. The motion carried unanimously.

4. **Request the Town Council approve the asset disposal for the Vernon Police Department.** (See memorandum from Jeffrey A. O'Neill, Finance Officer and Treasurer dated February 15, 2023 to Mayor Daniel A. Champagne and Town Administrator Michael J. Purcaro relative to same.)

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PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE DISPOSAL OF ASSETS FOR THE VERNON POLICE DEPARTMENT AS DISCLOSED ON THE REQUEST FOR DISPOSAL OF FIXED ASSETS FORM.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Bush made a motion to approve the disposal of assets for the Vernon Police Department as disclosed on the request for disposal of fixed assets form. Mayor Champagne spoke. The motion carried unanimously.

5. **Request the Town Council approve the asset disposal for the Vernon Public Schools.** (See memorandum from Jeffrey A. O'Neill, Finance Officer & Treasurer dated February 15, 2023 to Mayor Daniel A. Champagne and Town Administrator Michael J. Purcaro relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE DISPOSAL OF ASSETS FOR THE VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS AS DISCLOSED ON THE REQUEST FOR DISPOSAL OF FIXED ASSETS FORM.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Gessay, made a motion to approve the disposal of assets for the Vernon Public Schools as disclosed on the request for disposal of fixed assets form. Mayor Champagne and Town Administrator, Michael Purcaro, spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued. The motion carried unanimously.

6. **Request the Town Council cancel the public hearing scheduled for March 18, 2023 and reschedule for March 23, 2023 to allow for publishing deadlines for the legal notice.** (See memorandum from Diane Wheelock, Executive Assistant dated February 14, 2023 relative to same. *It should be noted that the budget meeting on March 18, 2023 will still be held as scheduled.*)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL AMENDS THE PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULE FOR THE 2023-2024 TOWN OF VERNON BUDGET CANCELLING THE PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 18, 2023 AT 9:05 AM AND ADDING A PUBLIC HEARING ON THURSDAY, MARCH 23, 2023 BEGINNING AT 7:05 PM. THE PUBLIC HEARING LOCATION WILL NOT CHANGE, THE HEARING WILL BE HELD IN THE TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 14 PARK PLACE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Bush, made a motion to amend the Public Hearing schedule for the 2023-2024 Town of Vernon budget cancelling the Public Hearing scheduled for March 18, 2023 at 9:05 am and adding a public hearing on Thursday, March 23, 2023 beginning at 7:05 pm. The public hearing location will not change, the hearing will be held in the Town Council Chambers, 14 Park Place, Vernon, Connecticut. Mayor Daniel A. Champagne spoke. Discussion ensued. The motion carried unanimously.

- L.) **INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:** None
- M.) **ACTION ON ORDINANCE (S) PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED:** None
- N.) **IDENTIFICATION/ADOPTION OF ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS:** None
- O.) **DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL ITEMS AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:** None

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P.) ADOPTION OF MINUTES

THE TOWN COUNCIL WAIVES THE READING OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING ON **FEBRUARY 7, 2023** AND THAT MINUTES OF SAID MEETING BE APPROVED.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made a motion to waive the reading of and approve the minutes of the regular Town Council meeting held on **February 7, 2023**. The motion carried unanimously.

E.) EXECUTIVE SESSION (Taken Out of Order)

8:04pm Council member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made the following motion to go into Executive Session #4. The Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION #4

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 LIZ BOLOGNA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ARTS CENTER EAST, TO ATTEND.

Liz Bologna, Executive Director, Vernon Community Arts Center, exited the session at 8:20pm.

8:25pm Executive Session #4 ended.

8:25pm Council member Motola, seconded by Council Member Bush, made the motion to go into Executive Session #1. The 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.

8:50pm Council Member Bush, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made the motion to go into Executive Session #2. Council Member Motola stepped out at 8:50pm. The Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION #2

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.

9:00pm Council member Bush, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made the motion to go into Executive Session #3. Council Member Motola entered session #3 at 9:00pm. The Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION #3

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

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A POTENTIAL SETTLEMENT AND INVITES MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR TO ATTEND.

9:20pm Council member Motola, seconded by Council Member Bush, made the motion to go into Executive Session #5. The Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION #5

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.

9:22pm Executive Session ended.

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

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE APPROPRIATION OF ARPA FUNDING IN THE AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$37,500.00 FOR THE PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF GUIDE RAILS FROM ATLAS INDUSTRIAL SERVICES, AND FURTHER AUTHORIZES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE OR HIS DESIGNEE TO SIGN ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS FOR SAME.

The motion carried unanimously.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Wendus made the following motion to **Executive Session #3**:

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY AGREES TO THE FULL AND FINAL SETTLEMENT AS PRESENTED IN THE MATTER OF **CRUZ V TOWN OF VERNON-BOE** TO RESOLVE SAID CLAIM. ONCE THE SETTLEMENT IS EXECUTED, IT WILL BECOME PUBLIC.

The motion carried unanimously.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Wendus made the following motion to **Executive Session #4**:

Motion #1

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY AUTHORIZES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE OR HIS DESIGNEE TO SIGN ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS RELATIVE TO THE ONE YEAR LEASE MODIFICATION WITH THE VERNON COMMUNITY ARTS CENTER.

The motion carried unanimously.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque made the following motion to **Executive Session #4**:

Motion #2

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY AUTHORIZES THE PAYMENT OF FIFTY PERCENT (50%) OF THE UTILITY COSTS FOR THE PROPERTY KNOWN AS 709 HARTFORD TURNPIKE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT. SAID FIFTY PERCENT (50%) UTILITY COSTS WILL BE PAID DIRECTLY TO THE UTILITY COMPANY AS REQUIRED THROUGH THE PUBLIC WORKS

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BUDGET. THE REMAINING FIFTY PERCENT (50%) WILL BE PAID BY THE TENANT, VERNON COMMUNITY ARTS CENTER PER SAID LEASE DATED APRIL 25, 2016.

The motion carried unanimously.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Bush made the following motion to **Executive Session #5**:

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH THE ROCKVILLE DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION FOR THE JULY IN THE SKY DOWNTOWN EVENT AS PRESENTED AND FURTHER AUTHORIZES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE OR HIS DESIGNEE TO SIGN ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS RELATIVE TO SAME.

The motion carried unanimously.

Q.) INFORMATIONAL ITEMS, Petitions, communications, correspondence, reports, etc. not requiring action: None

R.) ADJOURN (9:30 Pm)

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Nieves-Matias, made a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously at **9:30pm**.

Received: February 28, 2023
Approved: March 7, 2023

Submitted,



Meriline Sarkar
Recording Secretary