

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

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Mayor Daniel A. 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, Linda Gessay, Maryann Levesque, Brian Motola, Ariana Nieves-Matias, John O’Connell and Michael Wendus

Absent: Council Member Jim Tedford

Entered During Meeting: Council Member Letendre at 7:32 PM and
Council Member Rogers at 7:43 PM

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

C.) CITIZEN CITATIONS AND AWARDS

VOLUNTEER WALL HONOREES

Paul Shimer
Wesley D. Shorts

Mayor Champagne presented proclamations and pins to each honoree. Mr. Shimer and Mr. Shorts’ families were in attendance; each honoree thanked their families and the Town for this distinction.

Mayor Champagne introduced former Deputy Assessor, Christine Clarke, as the new Assessor for the Town of Vernon.

7:43 PM recess; reconvened at 7:52 PM

D.) CITIZEN’S FORUM

Genaro Gonzalez, West Main Street, spoke on the Vernon Housing Authority and the Park West Apartments roof project.

Steve Wakefield and Polly Schaefer of the Vernon Summer Days Carnival committee spoke and presented the proceeds of the 2023 Carnival (\$12,000) to Mayor Daniel A. Champagne.

Terilynn Rogers, thanked everyone as her term ends.

Maryann Levesque thanked Council Members Letendre and Nieves-Matias for their service.

8:04 PM Citizen’s Forum ended.

F.) PUBLIC HEARING

None

G.) PRESENTATIONS BY THE ADMINISTRATION

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

- Thanks to Council Members Ann Letendre and Ariana Nieves-Matias for their service to the Town, acknowledging Ann's place on the Wall of Honor.
- The 4th annual Trunk or Treat will be October 26th at Henry Park from 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM. All children are welcome.
- Socktober is supported again this year by the Town of Vernon. Please bring new socks to any of the donation boxes until November 15th. Thank you to Tom Glinski, the former RHS student who initiated this very worthwhile program.
- Seniorhood Resource Fair, sponsored by the Tolland County Multi-Disciplinary Team, is Saturday, October 21st from 9:30 AM to 2:00 PM. All are welcome to attend.
- Speed humps have been installed at Rockville High School, Vernon Center Middle School and Lake Street School, which will enhance safety at our schools. Other area school buildings are being evaluated to slow traffic.
- A model train show sponsored by Amherst Railroad Society, to benefit the RHS band and the Vernon Public School music departments, will be held on October 29th from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM at Vernon Center Middle School. Children under 12 are free, \$8.00 over 12, with a maximum of \$20 per family.
- The Town has been awarded a National Institute of Justice reimbursement grant in the amount of \$9,012.50 for bullet-proof vests for our police department. A total of 15 vests were purchased.
- The Fair Rent Commission is almost complete in its membership. Thank you to everyone who has assisted in identifying potential members. No appeals have been received to date.

Mayor Champagne announced the Town has renewed the contract with Opportunity Works for one month in the clean-up of downtown through the nip bottle campaign. He read a letter from Renee Lambert of Opportunity Works thanking the Town Council for recognizing the contributions of individuals with disabilities.

Liz Bologna, Director of the Vernon Community Arts Center dba Arts Center East, presented a slide show, gave an update on activities at the Center, and answered questions.

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 October 5, 2023 to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator from Terry Hjarne, Collector of Revenue relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES EIGHT (8) TAX REFUNDS FOR PRIOR YEARS TOTALING \$5020.64 AND TWENTY-THREE (23) REFUNDS FOR CURRENT YEAR TOTALING \$2544.25 AS OUTLINED IN THE MEMORANDUM FROM TERRY HJARNE, COLLECTOR OF REVENUE TO MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR DATED OCTOBER 5, 2023.

I.) DISCUSSION OF PULLED CONSENT ITEMS

None

J.) PENDING BUSINESS

None

K.) NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Request the Town Council authorize Mayor Daniel A. Champagne to apply for and receive the FFY 2023 Emergency Management Performance Grant in the amount of \$33,358.60. (See memorandum from Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator to Mayor Daniel A. Champagne and the Town Council dated October 4, 2023 relative to same.)

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED, THE TOWN COUNCIL AUTHORIZES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL NECESSARY PAPERWORK TO MAKE APPLICATION FOR AND RECEIVE FFY 2023 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE GRANT (EMPG) FUNDING OFFERED BY THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES AND PUBLIC PROTECTION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$33,358.60, AND FURTHER AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTION OF THE REQUIRED RESOLUTION ATTACHED.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member O'Connell, made a motion authorizing Mayor Daniel A. Champagne to execute necessary documents to apply for and receive FFY 2023 Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) from the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection in the amount of \$33,358.60. Nichole Greco, Projects and Grants Coordinator was present. No discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

- 2. Request the Town Council authorize Mayor Daniel A. Champagne to apply for and receive the Gary Sinise Fire Department Grant for the purchase of fourteen AED's to be deployed on Town of Vernon fire apparatus. (See memorandum to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator from Nichole Greco, Projects and Grants Coordinator, Daniel Wasilewski, Fire Marshal and Fire Administrator and Katie McGray, Chief Medical Officer dated October 3, 2023 relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY AUTHORIZES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE OR HIS DESIGNEE TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS TO MAKE APPLICATION FOR AND RECEIVE THE GARY SINISE FOUNDATION FIRST RESPONDER FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$29,850.38.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made a motion authorizing Mayor Daniel A. Champagne or his designee to execute necessary documents to apply for and receive the Gary Sinise Foundation First Responder Funds in the amount of \$29,850.38. Daniel Wasilewski, Fire Marshal and Fire Administrator, spoke on the grant funds. Discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously.

- 3. Request from Town Council member Ann Letendre recommending the dissolution of the Hockanum River Linear Park Committee. (See memorandum dated October 4, 2023 to Mayor Daniel A. Champagne from Ann Letendre Town Council member relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY DISSOLVES THE HOCKANUM RIVER LINEAR PARK COMMITTEE AS PRESENTED IN THE AUGUST 24, 1970 RESOLUTION.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Letendre, made a motion to dissolve the Hockanum River Linear Park Committee as presented in the August 24, 1970 resolution. Council Member Ann Letendre, a long-time member of the Hockanum River Linear Park Committee, spoke on the history and projects of this committee. Mayor Champagne spoke and thanked Ann Letendre and the committee members for all the work accomplished by this group. Discussion ensued. Motion carried unanimously.

L.) INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

None

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

None

E.) EXECUTIVE SESSION (Taken Out of Order)

8:30 PM Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Bush, made the following motion to go into Executive Session. Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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 ADMINISTRATOR TO ATTEND.

9:08 PM Executive Session ended.

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

MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWN OF VERNON AND THE VERNON POLICE ASSOCIATION FOR A PERIOD BEGINNING JULY 1, 2022 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2026, AS PRESENTED.

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

1. Monthly Report for September, 2023 from the Town Clerk's Office as submitted by Karen C. Daigle, Town Clerk.

R.) Adjourn (9:08 PM)

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Nieves-Matias, made a motion to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.

Received:

Approved:



Karen C. Daigle
Recording Secretary