

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

RECEIVED
 VERNON TOWN CLERK
 23 OCT 30 PM 3:54

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, Ann Letendre, Maryann Levesque, Brian Motola, John O’Connell and Jim Tedford

Absent: Council Member Ariana Nieves-Matias, Terilynn Rogers and Michael Wendus

Entered During Meeting:

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

C.) **CITIZEN CITATIONS AND AWARDS**

VOLUNTEER WALL HONOREES

Mary Ann Hopowiec
 Jeff Cohen
 Bill Francis
 Peter Olson

Mayor Champagne spoke and presented proclamations and pins to Mary Ann Hopowiec, Jeff Cohen, Bill Francis and Peter Olson’s family. The honorees’ families were in attendance; each honoree and Mr. Olson’s family thanked the Town for this distinction.

7:45 PM recess; reconvened at 8:01 PM

D.) **CITIZEN’S FORUM**

Genaro Gonzalez, West Main Street, spoke on the United States laws and rulings.

8:08 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:

- Thank you to everyone who attended the very successful Ribbon Cutting at the Miracle League Field. Several games have been played and WFSB’s Great Day did a live broadcast from this premier field. This is a very exciting recognition for Vernon.
- The Town’s Emergency and Risk Management, CERT and Friends of the Saxony Dog Park sponsored a Pet CPR and First Aid Class. More events are being planned, including specialized training for our first responders.
- The Town of Vernon’s 2023 Halloween Trunk or Treat will run from 4:30-7:00 PM on October 26th at Henry Park. Come join the fun.

- A Living History event sponsored by the New England War Museum was held last Saturday, attracting over 100 visitors. The Grand Army of the Republic members and presenters dressed in full period costume and entertained all in attendance.
- On September 25th the Town of Vernon and Department of Transportation held a press conference launching Vernon's Nip Responsibly Campaign. Thank you to all participating in this valuable public health and safety program led by the Town of Vernon.
- The Town's Engineering Department, led by Dave Smith, Town Engineer, Craig Perry, Senior Engineering Technician and Joe Boucher, Town Surveyor, held a public information meeting relative to the upcoming sidewalk project through a grant from CRCOG. The event was well attended by residents in that area.
- The Rockville Public Library has had the highest number of visitors since July 2019. Over the three summer months, there were over 20,000 visits to the library, over 28,000 items were circulated and 363 new card members were added.
- On Wednesday, October 4th at 2:00 PM, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is planning a nationwide emergency alert test sending messages to cell phones across the United States.

Mayor Champagne presented Fire Marshal and Fire Administrator Daniel Wasilewski and Fire Chief Steve Eppler with a Proclamation for Fire Prevention Week, with each speaking on fire prevention.

Fire Marshal and Fire Administrator Daniel Wasilewski gave an update relative to the activities in the Fire Marshal's office, including the EMS division, reintroduced Chief Medical Officer Katie McGray, and spoke on the Vernon Fire Department. He thanked the Mayor and Town Council, Town Administrator Michael Purcaro, and several departments for their continued support.

E.) EXECUTIVE SESSION (Taken Out of Order)

8:24 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, DANIEL WASILEWSKI, FIRE MARSHAL AND FIRE ADMINISTRATOR, STEPHEN EPPLER, FIRE CHIEF, ROBERT BABCOCK, ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF AND ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF AREL TO ATTEND.

8:50 PM Executive Session ended.

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

MOTION TO EXECUTIVE SESSION #1

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE ENHANCEMENTS TO THE FIRE DEPARTMENT REMUNERATION AS FOLLOWS:

- INCIDENT RESPONSE ENHANCEMENT

\$5.00 PER CALL BETWEEN 6AM -10PM
\$8.00 PER CALL BETWEEN 10PM – 6AM

- CERTIFICATION ENHANCEMENTS
TIMS INSTRUCTOR \$50.00 PER QUARTER
(\$200.00 per year)
FIREFIGHTER I \$100 PER QUARTER
(\$400.00 per year)
FIREFIGHTERS II \$200.00 PER QUARTER
((\$800.00 per year)
FIRE OFFICER \$300.00 PER QUARTER
(\$1200.00 per year)
- DUTY OFFICER ENHANCEMENT
(\$20.00 per night)

THE TOWN COUNCIL FURTHER AUTHORIZES AN ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION UP TO \$65,000.00 TO FUND SAID ENHANCEMENTS TO THE FIRE DEPARTMENT REMUNERATION FROM THE GENERAL FUND.

Motion carried unanimously.

H.) ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, 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 September 25, 2023 to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator from Terry Hjarne, Collector of Revenue relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES ONE (1) TAX REFUND FOR PRIOR YEARS TOTALING \$19.82 AND TWENTY-THREE (23) REFUNDS FOR CURRENT YEAR TOTALING \$5,768.46 AS OUTLINED IN THE MEMORANDUM FROM TERRY HJARNE, COLLECTOR OF REVENUE TO MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR DATED SEPTEMBER 25, 2023.

- C 2.** Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of Geoffrey Seidor (U), 27 Gardner Road, Vernon, Connecticut as a regular member of the Inland Wetlands Regulatory Commission, said term to commence on October 4, 2023 and expires December 31, 2025. (A copy of Mr. Seidor'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 SEIDOR (U), 27 GARDNER ROAD, VERNON, CONNECTICUT AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE INLAND WETLANDS REGULATORY

COMMISSION, SAID TERM TO COMMENCE ON OCTOBER 4, 2023 AND EXPIRES ON DECEMBER 31, 2025.

- C 3.** Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of John Morissette (U), 10 Susan Road, Vernon, Connecticut as a regular member of the Energy Improvement District Board, said term to commence on October 4, 2023 and expires on June 30, 2028. (A copy of Mr. Morissette's 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 JOHN MORISSETTE (U), 10 SUSAN ROAD, VERNON, CONNECTICUT AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE ENERGY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT BOARD, SAID TERM TO COMMENCE ON OCTOBER 4, 2023 AND EXPIRES ON JUNE 30, 2028.

- I.) **DISCUSSION OF PULLED CONSENT ITEMS**
None
- J.) **PENDING BUSINESS**
None
- K.) **NEW BUSINESS**

- 1.** Request the Town Council authorize Mayor Daniel A. Champagne or his designee to apply for and receive two grants for the Vernon Police Department. (See memorandum dated September 28, 2023 from Chief of Police John Kelley to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY AUTHORIZES THE APPLICATION FOR AND THE RECEIPT OF TWO GRANTS FOR THE VERNON POLICE DEPARTMENT, THE **2024 DISTRACTED DRIVING HIGH VISIBILITY ENFORCEMENT GRANT** AND THE **2023-2024 CLICK IT OR TICKET CAMPAIGN GRANT**, THE COUNCIL FURTHER AUTHORIZES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE OR HIS DESIGNEE TO SIGN ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS FOR SAME.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member O'Connell, made a motion authorizing Mayor Champagne or his designee to apply for and receive the 2024 Distracted Driving High Visibility Enforcement Grant and the 2023-2024 Click It or Ticket Campaign Grant. 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

THE TOWN COUNCIL WAIVES THE READING OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 19, 2023 AND THAT MINUTES OF SAID MEETING BE APPROVED.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member O’Connell, made a motion to waive the reading of and approve the minutes of the September 19, 2023 regular Town Council meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

F.) EXECUTIVE SESSION (Continued)

8:58 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

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.

9:08 PM Executive Session #2 ended.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Bush, made the following motion to go into Executive Session #3. Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION #3

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 DAWN MASELEK, ASSISTANT TOWN ADMINISTRATOR TO ATTEND.

9:18 PM Executive Session #3 ended.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION #2

PURSUANT TO CHARTER CHAPTER XI, SECTION 4 (a) ENTITLED “QUALIFIED OFFICERS WITHIN THE CLASSIFIED SERVICE HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE’S APPOINTMENT OF CHRISTINE CLARKE TO THE POSITION OF TOWN OF VERNON ASSESSOR.

Motion carried unanimously.

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

R.) Adjourn (9:19 PM)

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

Received:

Approved:



Karen C. Daigle
Recording Secretary