

Draft Minutes
VERNON TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
TOWN HALL – 14 PARK PLACE – 3RD FLOOR, VERNON, CONNECTICUT
Tuesday, December 19, 2023
7:30 P.M.

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23 DEC 28 PM 3:34

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

A.) **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Recited

B.) **ROLL CALL:**

- Present: Council Members Laurie Abernathy, Laura Bush, Julie Clay, Bill Dauphin, Maryann Levesque, Brian Motola, Terilynn Rogers, Jesse Schoolnik, Andrew Tedford, Michael Wendus, Phyllis Winkler
- Absent: Jim Tedford
- Entered During Meeting: None
- Also Present: Mayor Daniel A. Champagne, Town Administrator Michael Purcaro, Recording Secretary Meriline Sarkar

C.) **CITIZEN CITATIONS AND AWARDS:** None

D.) **CITIZENS FORUM:** None

G.) **PRESENTATIONS BY THE ADMINISTRATION**

Mayor Daniel A. Champagne presented Citations of Appreciation to Bill Campbell, Ann Letendre, John O'Connell and Ariana Nieves-Matias for their service on the Council.

E.) **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

7:41 PM Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made the following 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) (B), HEREBY MOVES TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS STRATEGY AND NEGOTIATIONS WITH RESPECT TO PENDING CLAIMS OR PENDING LITIGATION AND INVITES MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR TO ATTEND.

8:00 PM Executive Session #1 ended. No action taken.

F.) **PUBLIC HEARING:** None

G.) **PRESENTATIONS BY THE ADMINISTRATION (continued)**

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

1. Mayor Daniel A. Champagne announced that the Retired Chief, Retired Fire Marshal and Life member of the Fire Department Donald Maguda passed away. Chief Maguda served with the Rockville Fire Department beginning in 1954 with the Snipsic Hook and Ladder Company and ultimately became Rockville FD Chief in 1967. He oversaw the consolidation of the two Fire Departments in 1980 forming what is now known as the Vernon Volunteer Fire Department in 1980. Continuing his service to Vernon he retired as Fire Marshal in 2002. A moment of silence was observed in his honor.
2. Mayor Daniel A. Champagne reminded the Council Members to sign the receipt of the updated Town of Vernon Code of Ordinances for the Clerk and hand it to Karen at the end of the meeting.
3. The Digital Billboard on 84 is up and running. The owner has delivered a check for \$256,000 as promised. Mayor Daniel A. Champagne has negotiated free advertising for the Town of Vernon and Emergency Preparedness messaging to be displayed. Some of the topics currently showing are:
 - Parks and Open Space
 - NIP Responsibly Campaign
 - Award Winning Schools
 - Vernon is Hiring, and many more topics to come.
4. The postponed Winterfest was very successful. The Rockville High School Choir came to help sing songs, Santa visited with all the children in his house. Everyone had cookies, cider, and hot chocolate and the weather cooperated. Mayor Daniel A. Champagne thanked everyone who accommodated the change to make this a successful event.
5. Health and Safety Day at the Vernon Senior Center is scheduled for January 24, 2023 for members only. The event is sponsored by the Office of Emergency and Risk Management. Several topics will be discussed: a presentation by the Fire and Police Departments; a program called "Ask the Doctor", Dr. Rampal will take any questions from the audience and the final segment will be a basic self-defense awareness course. Sign up is available through the Senior Center. This is a members-only event.
6. The 70th Annual Fire Department Toys for Tikes distribution was on December 18, 2023. Members of the Fire Department distributed toys to needy families in Vernon to ensure children have a happy holiday. Thousands of toys were distributed and about 250 children will receive those gifts. Chief Babcock called the toy distribution night the "best night of the year" for firefighters. Mayor Daniel A. Champagne gave special Thanks to Diane Carpenter and Nettie Kenzior for all their hard work organizing the annual event, and to all those who donated.

H.) ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Bush, made a motion to move the Consent Agenda. The 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 December 11, 2023 to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator from Terry Hjarne, Collector of Revenue relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES TWO (2) TAX REFUNDS FOR PRIOR YEARS TOTALING \$3628.48 AND FOUR (4) REFUNDS FOR CURRENT YEAR TOTALING \$3505.15 AS OUTLINED IN THE MEMORANDUM FROM TERRY HJARNE, COLLECTOR OF REVENUE TO MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR DATED DECEMBER 11, 2023.

- C 2.** Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of John B. O'Connell, (R), 170 Blue Ridge Drive, Vernon, Connecticut as an alternate member of the Conservation Commission, said term to commence January 1, 2024 and expires December 31, 2026. (A copy of Mr. O'Connell's resume is included for Council review.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO TOWN OF VERNON ORDINANCE # 189 – TOWN CODE SECTION 10-91 & 10-92, THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF JOHN B. O'CONNELL, (R), 170 BLUE RIDGE DRIVE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER OF THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION, SAID TERM TO BEGIN JANUARY 1, 2024 AND EXPIRES ON DECEMBER 31, 2026.

- C 3.** Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of Joseph Miller, (R), 27 Tallwood Drive, Vernon, Connecticut as a regular member of the Inland Wetlands Regulatory Commission, said term to commence on January 2, 2024 and expires December 31, 2024. (A copy of Mr. Miller's resume is included for Council review. It should be noted that Mr. Miller is completing the unexpired term of Ms. Reudgen.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO CHARTER CHAPTER VIII, SEC. 8, THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF JOSEPH MILLER, (R), 27 TALLWOOD DRIVE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE INLAND WETLANDS REGULATORY COMMISSION, SAID TERM TO COMMENCE ON JANUARY 2, 2024 AND EXPIRES ON DECEMBER 31, 2024.

- C 4.** Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of Susan Reudgen, (R), 61 East Street, Vernon, Connecticut as an alternate member of the Planning and Zoning Commission, said term to commence January 2, 2024 and expires December 31, 2027. (A copy of Ms. Reudgen's resume is included for Council review. It should be noted that Ms. Reudgen is completing the unexpired term of Steven Ransom.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO THE VERNON TOWN CHARTER, CHAPTER VIII, SEC. 1, 6 & 11, AND CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES SEC. 8-4 A & B, THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF SUSAN REUDGEN, (R), 61 EAST STREET, VERNON, CONNECTICUT, TO ALTERNATE MEMBER OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION FOR A TERM COMMENCING ON JANUARY 2, 2024 AND EXPIRES DECEMBER 31, 2027.

- C 5. Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of Frank Borysevicz (R), 93 Thrall Road, Vernon, Connecticut as a regular member of the Board of Ethics, said term to commence on December 20, 2023 and continues November 30, 2028. (A copy of Mr. Borysevicz'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 FRANK BORYSEVICZ (R), 93 THRALL ROAD, VERNON, CONNECTICUT AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF ETHICS, SAID TERM TO COMMENCE ON DECEMBER 20, 2023 AND ENDS ON NOVEMBER 30, 2028.

- C 6. Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of Eva Perrina, (U), 73 Riverside Drive, Vernon, Connecticut as a regular member of the Planning and Zoning Commission, said term to commence on January 1, 2024 and expires December 31, 2026. (A copy of Ms. Perrina's resume is included for Council review.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO CHARTER CHAPTER VIII, SEC. 1,6 & 11 DATED JANUARY 1, 1985; C.G.S. §8-4 A&B, THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF EVA PERRINA, (U), 73 RIVERSIDE DRIVE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT AS A REGULAR MEMBER OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION FOR A TERM TO COMMENCE ON JANUARY 1, 2024 AND EXPIRES DECEMBER 31, 2026.

- I.) DISCUSSION OF PULLED CONSENT ITEMS: None
 - J.) PENDING BUSINESS: None
 - K.) NEW BUSINESS
1. Request the Town Council approve the purchase of four Aiming Lasers for the Vernon Police Department. (See memorandum from Chief John Kelley dated November 3, 2023 to Michael Purcaro, Town Administrator relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE PURCHASE OF FOUR AIMING LASERS FOR THE VERNON POLICE DEPARTMENT IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$14,658.87 FROM PROFORCE WITH FUNDING FROM THE STATE ASSET FORFEITURE ACCOUNT. THE TOWN 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 Bush, made a motion to approve the purchase of four aiming lasers for the Vernon Police Department in an amount not to exceed \$14,658.87 from Proforce with funding from the State Asset Forfeiture Account. The Town Council further authorizes Mayor Daniel A. Champagne or his designee to sign any and all documents for same.

Police Chief John Kelley spoke to describe the purpose and use of the aiming lasers, and answered questions from the Council Members.

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
- P.) **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

THE TOWN COUNCIL WAIVES THE READING OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING OF **DECEMBER 5, 2023** AND MOVES TO APPROVE SAID MINUTES.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Rogers, made a motion to waive the reading and approve the minutes of the Regular Town Council meeting on December 5, 2023. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made the following motion.

IN THE INTEREST OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY, THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY AMENDS THE ACTION TAKEN AT THE DECEMBER 5, 2023 TOWN COUNCIL MEETING RELATIVE TO EXECUTIVE SESSION #2 TO READ: THE TOWN COUNCIL AMENDS THE AMOUNT APPROPORATED TO \$68,000.00 FOR 162 WARREN AVENUE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT, SUCH AUTHORIZED EXPENDITURE CONTINUES TO BE A REIMBURSEABLE EXPENSE.

The motion carried unanimously.

- R.) **ADJOURNMENT (8:14 PM)**

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Bush, made motion to adjourn at 8:14 PM. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Meriline Sarkar
Recording Secretary