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Draft Minutes
VERNON TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
TOWN HALL – 14 PARK PLACE – 3RD FLOOR
VERNON, CONNECTICUT
TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2024
7:30 P.M.

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, Bill Dauphin, Maryann Levesque, Brian R. Motola, John B. O'Connell, Terilynn Rogers, Jesse Schoolnik, Andrew J. Tedford, Jim Tedford, Phyllis Winkler
- Absent: Laura B. Bush and Michael D. Wendus
- 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

E.) **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None

F.) **PUBLIC HEARING:** None

G.) **PRESENTATIONS BY THE ADMINISTRATION**

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

1. **Mother's Day Dash**—May 12th. The Race begins at 9:00 AM. At Henry Park. Mayor informs anyone interested in participating should contact the Parks and Recreation Department.
2. **Memorial Day Parade**- May 27th. Northeast School Step Off at 10:00 AM followed by a ceremony at Lugg Field in Grove Hill Cemetery. The Parade continues to Central Park for the Closing Ceremonies. Council Staging Information is on the table tonight. Gar Museum will be open during the parade and the Shriners Motor Patrol will provide entertainment while spectators wait for the parade to arrive.
3. **Maple Street School 100th Anniversary Invitation**- May 15th from 4:00 PM-6:30 PM. Rain date is May 16th Same Time.

Proclamation declaring Town Clerk Week May 5-11, 2024 in the Town of Vernon.

Mayor Daniel A. Champagne congratulated and thanked Town Clerk Karen C. Daigle and her staff.

H.) **ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA**

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, 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 April 25, 2024 to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator from Terry Hjarne, Collector of Revenue relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES TWO (2) REFUNDS FOR PRIOR FISCAL YEAR (S) TAXES TOTALING \$8691.37 AND FIVE (5) CURRENT FISCAL YEAR TOTALING \$1512.02 AS OUTLINED IN THE MEMORANDUM FROM TERRY HJARNE, COLLECTOR OF REVENUE TO MICHAEL J. PURCARO, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR DATED APRIL 25, 2024.

- C 2.** Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of John Kleinhans, 14 Park Place, Vernon Connecticut as Treasurer for the Town of Vernon said term commences on May 8, 2024 and expires on December 31, 2027. (John Kleinhans is an employee of the Town therefore no resume is included.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL, CONSISTENT WITH CHAPTER IX, SECTION TWO OF THE TOWN CHARTER, ENTITLED "OFFICERS AND BOARDS APPOINTED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL, HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF JOHN W. KLEINHANS, 14 PARK PLACE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT AS TOWN TREASURER, SAID TERM TO BEGIN MAY 8, 2024 AND EXPIRES DECEMBER 31, 2027.

- C 3.** Request the Town Council approve Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's appointment of David Howey, (R) 55 Grove Street, Vernon, Connecticut as a tenant commissioner for the Vernon Housing Authority Board. said term to commence on May 8, 2024 and expires on February 28, 2025. (Mr. Howey's resume is included for Council review. It should be noted that Mr. Howey is completing the unexpired term of Kathleen McCarthy, Tenant Commissioner.)

PROPOSED MOTION

PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 8, SECTION 5 OF THE VERNON TOWN CHARTER THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE'S APPOINTMENT OF DAVID HOWEY, (R). 55 GROVE STREET, VERNON, CONNECTICUT AS A TENANT COMMISSION FOR THE VERNON HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD, SAID TERM TO BEGIN MAY 8, 2024 AND EXPIRES ON FEBRUARY 28, 2025.

I.) DISCUSSION OF PULLED CONSENT ITEMS: None

J.) PENDING BUSINESS: None

K.) NEW BUSINESS

- 1.** Request the Town Council approve the application for and the receipt of a Performance Grant for the Concert Series in the amount of \$6000.00 offered by the Music Drives Us, New

England's Leading Music Foundation. (See the memo from Marty Sitler, Director of Parks and Recreation to Michael Purcaro, Town Administrator dated April 29, 2024 relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE VERNON TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY AUTHORIZES THE VERNON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT TO APPLY FOR AND RECEIVE THE PERFORMANCE GRANT FOR THE CONCERT SERIES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$6000.00 OFFERED BY THE MUSIC DRIVES US, NEW ENGLAND'S LEADING MUSIC FOUNDATION, AND 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 Jim Tedford, made a motion to authorize the Vernon Parks And Recreation Department to apply for and receive the Performance Grant for the Concert Series in the amount of \$6000.00 offered by the Music Drives Us, New England's Leading Music Foundation, and further the Town Council authorizes Mayor Daniel A. Champagne or his designee to sign any and all documents for same.

Mayor Daniel A. Champagne spoke to the Town Council and answered questions from the Council Members. Nichole Greco, Projects and Grants Coordinator, spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued.

The motion carried unanimously.

2. Request the Town Council approve the Asset Disposals for the Vernon IT Department. (See memorandum dated April 9, 2024 from John W. Kleinhans to Mayor Daniel A. Champagne and Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY APPROVES THE DISPOSAL OF ASSETS FOR THE VERNON IT DEPARTMENT AS DISCLOSED ON THE REQUEST FOR DISPOSAL OF FIXED ASSET FORMS.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Rogers, made a motion to approve the disposal of assets for the Vernon IT Department as disclosed on the request for disposal of fixed asset forms. No discussion.

The motion carried unanimously.

3. Request the Town Council approve a bid waiver for Horowitz Pool House Basement Perimeter Drain System. (See memorandum dated May 2, 2024 from John W. Kleinhans, Finance Officer to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

RESOLVE, THE TOWN COUNCIL, CONSISTENT WITH THE TOWN CHARTER, CHAPTER 12, SECTION 9, HEREBY WAIVES THE BID PROCEDURE FOR COSTS INVOLVING THE INSTALLATION OF A PERIMETER DRAIN SYSTEM IN THE BASEMENT OF THE

HOROWITZ POOL HOUSE IN THE AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$31,000 AND FURTHER AUTHORIZES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE OR HIS DESIGNEE, TO EXECUTE ON BEHALF OF THE TOWN OF VERNON ANY INSTRUMENT (S) TO THAT EFFECT WITH EASTERN WATERPROOFING CO., INC.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Jim Tedford, made a motion to waive the bid procedure for costs involving the installation of a perimeter drain system in the basement of the Horowitz Pool House in the amount not to exceed \$31,000 and further authorizes Mayor Daniel A. Champagne or his designee, to execute on behalf of the Town Of Vernon any instrument (s) to that effect with Eastern Waterproofing Co., Inc.

Mayor Daniel A. Champagne, Dwight Ryniewicz, Director of Public Works, and Nichole Greco, Projects and Grants Coordinator, spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued. The motion carried unanimously.

- 4. Request the Town Council approve the placement of properties totaling \$168,177.54 on the Suspense Tax Ledger.** (A copy of a memorandum from Terry Hjarne, Collector of Revenue dated April 25, 2024 to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator and a copy of the properties reflected on the Suspense Tax Ledger are included for Town Council review.)

PROPOSED MOTION

BY THE AUTHORITY GRANTED IN CONNECTICUT STATE STATUTE SECTION 12-165, ENTITLED "MUNICIPAL SUSPENSE TAX BOOK", THE TOWN COUNCIL APPROVES THE PLACEMENT OF PROPERTIES TOTALING \$168,177.54 CONTAINED ON THE SUSPENSE TAX LEDGER REPORT AS PROVIDED BY TERRY HJARNE, COLLECTOR OF REVENUE, DATED MAY, 2024.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made a motion to approve the placement of properties totaling \$168,177.54 contained on the Suspense Tax Ledger Report as provided by Terry Hjarne, Collector Of Revenue, dated May, 2024.

Terry Hjarne, Collector of Revenue, spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued.

The motion carried unanimously.

- 5. Request the Town Council approve the Tax Abatement of Town owned property as outlined by the memorandum from Terry Hjarne, Collector of Revenue dated April 22, 2024 to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator regarding same.** (A copy of said memorandum is included for the Council's review.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL PURSUANT TO CONNECTICUT STATE STATUTE 12-81 MOVES TO ABATE THE TAXES FOR TUNNEL VIEW TERR-ROADWAY UNIQUE ID #18-0144-002AR AND TUNNEL VIEW TER UNIQUE ID # 18-0144-2A16B AS PRESENTED IN THE MEMORANDUM DATED APRIL 22, 2024.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made a motion to abate the taxes for Tunnel View Terr-Roadway Unique Id #18-0144-002AR and Tunnel View Ter Unique ID # 18-0144-2A16B as presented in the memorandum dated April 22, 2024.

Mayor Daniel A. Champagne spoke to explain the motion. No discussion.

The motion carried unanimously.

6. **Request the Town Council approve the Senior Center grant application for the ARPA funds offered by the State Department of Aging & Disability Services in the amount of \$68,793.00 to construct a walking trail at the Vernon Senior Center.** (See memorandum from Nichole Greco, Projects and Grants Coordinator to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator dated April 25, 2024 relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY AUTHORIZES THE VERNON SENIOR CENTER TO APPLY FOR AND RECEIVE THE ARPA FUNDS OFFERED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$68,793.00 TO CONSTRUCT A WALKING TRAIL AT THE VERNON SENIOR CENTER AND FURTHER AUTHORIZES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE OR HIS DESIGNEE TO SIGN ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS RELATIVE TO SAME.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Jim Tedford, made a motion to authorize the Vernon Senior Center to apply for and receive the ARPA Funds offered by the State Department Of Aging And Disability Services in the amount of \$68,793.00 to construct a walking trail at the Vernon Senior Center and further authorizes Mayor Daniel A. Champagne or his designee to sign any and all documents relative to same.

Mayor Daniel A. Champagne spoke. No discussion.

The motion carried unanimously.

7. **Request the Town Council schedule two Public Hearings relative the two project closeouts for the 2018 and 2022 Small Cities, Community Development Block Grant Funds (CDBG).** (See memorandum dated April 25, 2024 from Nichole Greco, Projects and Grants Coordinator to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY SCHEDULES TWO PUBLIC HEARINGS TO HEAR COMMENT AND ANSWER QUESTIONS RELATIVE TO SMALL CITIES CDBG PROJECT CLOSEOUTS: THE FIRST HEARING RELATIVE TO THE 2022 SMALL CITIES CDBG KIDSAFE RETAINING WALL, SAID PUBLIC HEARING WILL BE HELD ON JUNE 18, 2024 AT 7:35 PM; THE SECOND HEARING IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE FIRST, RELATIVE TO THE 2018 SMALL CITIES CDBG CRUMBLING FOUNDATIONS TESTING PROGRAM. BOTH HEARINGS WILL BE HELD IN THE TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 14 PARK PLACE, VERNON, CONNECTICUT.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Jim Tedford, made a motion to schedule two Public Hearings to hear, comment, and answer questions relative to Small Cities CDBG Project Closeouts: the first hearing relative to the 2022 Small Cities CDBG KidSafe retaining wall, said Public Hearing will be held on June 18, 2024 at 7:35 pm; the second hearing immediately following the first, relative to the 2018 Small Cities CDBG crumbling foundations testing program. Both hearings will be held in the Town Council Chambers, 14 Park Place, Vernon, Connecticut.

Nichole Greco, Projects and Grants Coordinator, spoke and answered questions. Mayor Daniel A. Champagne spoke. Discussion ensued.

The motion carried unanimously.

8. Request the Town Council approve the Vernon Youth Services Bureau to apply for and receive the School Readiness Grant for FY25 offered by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood. (See memorandum dated April 25, 2024 from Michelle Hill, Youth Services Director to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY AUTHORIZES THE VERNON YOUTH SERVICES BUREAU TO APPLY FOR AND RECEIVE THE SCHOOL READINESS GRANT FOR FY25 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$353,531.00 OFFERED BY THE CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD, AND FURTHER AUTHORIZES MAYOR DANIEL A. CHAMPAGNE OR HIS DESIGNEE TO SIGN AND ALL DOCUMENTS FOR SAME.

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Abernathy, made a motion to authorize the Vernon Youth Services Bureau to apply for and receive the School Readiness Grant for FY25 in the amount of \$353,531.00 offered by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, and further authorizes Mayor Daniel A. Champagne or his designee to sign and all documents for same.

Michelle Hill, Youth Services Director, spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued.

The motion carried unanimously.

9. Request the Town Council approve the Vernon Office of Emergency Management to apply for and receive FFY 2023 Emergency Management Competitive Pool Funding in the amount of \$25,000.00. (See memorandum dated April 25, 2024 from Nichole Greco, Projects and Grant Coordinator to Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator relative to same.)

PROPOSED MOTION

THE TOWN COUNCIL HEREBY AUTHORIZES THE VERNON OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TO APPLY FOR AND RECEIVE FFY 2023 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMPETITIVE POOL FUNDING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$25,000.00, 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 authorize the Vernon Office Of Emergency Management to apply for and receive FFY 2023 Emergency Management Competitive Pool Funding in the amount of \$25,000.00, and further authorizes Mayor Daniel A. Champagne or his designee to sign any and all documents for same.

Michael J. Purcaro, Town Administrator, spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued.

The motion carried unanimously.

10. Discussion relative to the Teen Center requested by Council Member Winkler. (See email attached for Council review.)

NO ACTION

Council Member Winkler spoke and answered questions. Discussion ensued. No action taken.

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 APRIL 16, 2024 AND THAT MINUTES OF SAID MEETING BE APPROVED.

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 **APRIL 16, 2024**.

The motion carried unanimously.

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

1. Memorandum from Terry Hjarne, Collector of Revenue dated April 25, 2024 relative to Waiver of Interest per CGS § 12-145.

R.) ADJOURNMENT (8:25 PM)

Council Member Motola, seconded by Council Member Levesque, made motion to adjourn at 8:25 PM. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Meriline Sarkar
Recording Secretary

