

TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT  
**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
Robert F. Parisi Council Chambers  
**TUESDAY, March 12, 2024**  
**6:30 P.M.**  
**RECORD OF VOTES & MINUTES**

The Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, March 12, 2024 was called to order at 6:30pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. Councilors in attendance were Autumn Allinson, Samuel Carmody, Craig Fishbein, Tom Laffin, Christopher Regan, Jesse Reynolds, Christina Tatta, Vincent F. Testa Jr., and Chairman Joseph A. Marrone III. Also in attendance were Mayor Vincent Cervoni, Corporation Council Janis Small and Town Clerk Kristen Panzo.

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Consent Agenda
  - 3a. Consider and approve Tax Refunds totaling \$7,544.97 (#661- #682)  
Account # 1001001-41020- Tax Dept.
  - 3b. Acceptance of donation from the Kiwanis Club and consider and approve appropriation in the amount of \$500 to Revenue Donations- Police, Acct. #2502002-47152 and to Expense Donations- Police, Acct. # 25020050-58830-10127 - Police Dept.
  - 3c. Consider and approve a transfer of funds in the amount of \$1,800 from Power Purchased for Pumping , Acct. #46100623 to Misc. Expense-Pumping , Acct. #46100626 - Sewer Division
  - 3d. Consider and approve appropriation for operating expenses for postage in the amount of \$10,500 from Revenue State – Misc. Early Voting, Acct. #1009051-45122 to Voters – Office Expenses, Acct. #10010600-5611 (\$3,900) and Comptroller Exp., Acct #10010400-58735 (\$6,600) – Registrar’s
  - 3e. Consider and approve delegating authority to the Law Department to settle collection cases on claims valued up to \$2,500 for the term of the Town Council ending January, 2026. - Law Dept.
  - 3f. Consider and approve Merit Review Board (2) - Human Resources

- 3g. Consider and approve job description for new classification for Attendant I (Trainee), - Sewer Division/Human Resources
- 3h. Consider and approve job description for new classification for Collections Maintainer (Trainee), - Sewer Division/ Human Resources
- 3i. Consider and approve reappointment of Lawrence Zabrowski to the Public Utilities Commission for a term of three (3) years effective immediately and expiring March 1, 2027- Mayor
- 3j. Consider and approve appointment of Tracey Weeks to the Board of Health for a term of four (4) years effective immediately and expiring on December 31, 2027- Mayor
- 3k. Consider and approve appointment of Building Maintenance Sub-Committee members effective immediately and expiring on December 24, 2024- Chairman Marrone

Jason Michael  
Bruce Conroy  
Bob Prentice  
Jeff Tilbrook  
James Quarrelo  
Gabe Ramos

- 3l. Consider and approve South Central Mutual Police Assistance Compact Police Dept. - Police Dept.
- 3m. Approve Minutes of February 27th Regular Town Council Meeting

**MOTION WAS MADE to approve Consent Items 3a-3m.  
MADE BY: TATTA  
SECONDED BY: FISHBEIN  
MOTION: PASSED**

4. **Items Removed from the Consent Agenda: None.**

5. **PUBLIC QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD**

Jerrilyn Cacace and John Gomes of South Whittlesey Ave spoke about the Islamic Center. They stated that last week there was a sign posted in front of the building stating that from March 11, 2024 through April 11, 2024 parking is allowed on both sides of the street. It is a two way street and both cars cannot fit down the street with parking of cars on both sides of the street.

There is no parking on the outside but they are allowing it for this month only. From 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. every night for one month the Islamic Center is allowing parking. This is a problem for renters and residents of the houses on this street. The renters who would normally park in front of the houses they are renting, now have no parking spots available for this month until after 11:00 p.m. Their spaces are being taken up by the people who are at the Islamic Center. The Center itself does not have a parking lot and is getting too big of a facility to be where they are in town Mr. Gomes stated. He also said that the renters and residents were never included in this decision when the center was first established in 2019. The people who work at the center also have no place to park. They never did. Both Mr. Gomes and Mrs. Cacace want the sign to be taken down on April 12, 2024, so the parking situation can go back to normal.

6. Discussion of old business- Chairman Marrone

6a. Update on Technology

Mayor Cervoni stated that the consultants have one more day of interviewing. Jeff Ziplo will consult with Councilor Regan and Mayor Cervoni will be working together to complete the process of hiring the Director of IT. As far as the Director of IT position, they had successful candidates that proceeded with first round interviews and five candidates will be moving forward for second round interviews near the end of the month.

6b. Update on Train Station RFP

Mayor Cervoni said that Don Crouch, Economic Specialist, received a letter from the EDC regarding the RFP for the Historic Train Station stating that as they embark on the process, the RFP will reflect the needs and wants as to what will happen with the Train Station.

7. Discussion and possible action on Hidden Brook Lane- Councilor Fishbein

Councilor Fishbein asked where we are with this seeing how it is on the agenda again for review. Attorney Small stated that the Town Engineer is going over the language for the easement. The engineer is still working on the completion of the AZ-Build Survey.

8. Public Hearing to consider and act upon on Additional Senior Citizen Real Property Tax Credit

Kevin Coons, Assessor and Rhonda Cowsall, Property Appraiser spoke about the new program being offered to senior citizens of Wallingford. Mr. Coons went over the State mandated program along with the two deferral programs that the Assessor's Office offers senior citizens. This new tax credit program would be based on eligibility by income. He mentioned that the State program and the deferral programs would put liens on people's property until the lien is paid off. Some people do not want to apply for these programs because of the liens.

Councilor Tatta asked questions about the liens. She asked to make sure that no one will be kicked out of their homes for non-payment of taxes due to these programs for the current

programs already in place. She asked how this tax program would differ from the other tax programs. Mr. Coons stated that this program is a tax credit program meaning if eligible then someone depending on their income would get a tax break. Someone can get a tax break up to 75% with a 4% interest rate. Councilor Tatta is happy with the programs that are in place.

Councilor Fishbein questioned the existing programs. He wanted to know the percentage on the deferral program of senior citizens who take advantage of such programs. Janis stated that the people who cannot get into the deferral program are delinquent on their taxes and the program is only eligible to people who are current with their taxes. More senior citizens can apply for the programs but do not. He questioned the totally disability statement made in the program. He asked if assets are considered in the income portion of the application.

Councilor Reynolds asked if the Assessor's Office had any real data as to how many people actually use these deferral programs. He stated that a person would have to have no real income to get the highest percentage of the tax credit applied to them. Also to get any real benefit from this program a person would have to live in Wallingford at least 20 years to get an additional \$400 of your taxes only making about \$22,000 a year in income. He wanted to know how many people would actually benefit from this program.

Mayor Cervoni stated that with the previous Councilors, a group of elderly taxes payers came before them asking to look at the deferral programs. The previous mayor had appointed a committee who worked with the Assessor to look at the impact of three different programs. After looking at the impact and the tax collection for the town the elderly tax payers decided on this program that is being presented tonight. It is a middle of the road solution.

Councilor Regan stated that under the committee's recommendation there was a requirement that the resident live here in Wallingford 183 days per year and be a full time resident that was not in this ordinance.

**MOTION WAS MADE to add the applicant's residency requirement, which is to be a property owner for at least five years and live at the residence for at least 183 days of each year.**

**MADE BY: REAGN  
SECONDED BY: FISHBEIN  
MOTION: PASSED**

**ROLL CALL**

**ALLINSON: AYE  
CARMODY: AYE  
FISHBEIN: AYE  
LAFFIN: AYE  
REGAN: AYE  
REYNOLDS: AYE  
TATTA: AYE**

**TESTA: AYE**  
**MARRONE: AYE**

Councilor Testa asked if we were in a public hearing. He asked about the process and if they should close the public hearing before voting on a motion. He asked for clarification about exactly what the resident would be paying for taxes. He asked if someone can apply for the deferral and tax credit program. Someone could indeed apply for both programs.

Councilor Fishbein asked if the tax amount for someone was \$400 and they get a tax break of \$400 would they then have to pay nothing for taxes. It was explained to him that to receive the maximum credit from the State, the tax bill would have to be \$2,500. If a person receives the maximum from the State program and the maximum from this program they would still have to pay \$850 in taxes. He asked how one would use both programs. The Assessor's Office would apply the credit first then the person could defer the net amount of their taxes.

Councilor Tatta also had questions about the two programs. She pointed out that if someone gets the tax break and then defers their taxes the town will only get the deferred portion back and not the tax break amount.

**MOTION WAS MADE to approve the Additional Senior Citizen Real Property Tax Credit as amended.**  
**MADE BY: MARRONE**  
**SECONDED BY: TESTA**  
**MOTION: PASSED**

**ROLL CALL**  
**ALLINSON: NAY**  
**CARMODY: AYE**  
**FISHBEIN: AYE**  
**LAFFIN: AYE**  
**REGAN: AYE**  
**REYNOLDS: AYE**  
**TATTA: NAY**  
**TESTA: AYE**  
**MARRONE: AYE**

9. Executive Session pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §1-225(f) and §1-200(6) (B) to discuss pending litigation in the matter of Pattison v. Town of Wallingford- Law Dept.

**MOTION WAS MADE to enter into Executive Session at 7:20pm.**  
**MADE BY: TATTA**  
**SECONDED BY: ALLINSON**

**Attendance in Executive Session**

**ALLINSON  
CARMODY  
FISHBEIN  
AFFIN  
REGAN  
REYNOLDS  
TATTA  
TESTA  
MARRONE  
CORPORATOIN COUNSEL JANIS SMALL  
MAYOR CERVONI**

**MOTION WAS MADE to come out of Executive Session and re-enter Regular Session at 7:58pm.**

**MADE BY: FISHBEIN  
SECONDED BY: TATTA**

10. Motion to waive bid for hiring of experts for Pattison v. Town of Wallingford as discussed in Executive Session- Law Dept.

**MOTION WAS MADE to approve item 10.**

**MADE BY: ALLINSON  
SECONDED BY: FISHBEIN**

**ROLL CALL**

**ALLINSON: AYE  
CARMODY: AYE  
FISHBEIN: AYE  
LAFFIN: AYE  
REGAN: AYE  
REYNOLDS: AYE  
TATTA: NAY  
TESTA: AYE  
MARRONE: AYE**

11. Consider and approve transfer of funds of \$35,000 from Salaries and Wages, Acct. #10010300-5100 (\$15,000) and Office Expenses and Supplies, Acct. #10010300-56100 (\$20,000) to Professional Services, Acct. #10010300-56710 – Lawyers \$35,000- Law Dept.

**MOTION WAS MADE to approve item 11.**

**MADE BY: TATTA  
SECONDED BY: ALLINSON**

**Voice Vote was made and everyone agreed and motioned passed.**

12. Discussion and possible action of process to appoint 1 member to the Building Maintenance Sub-Committee to replace Zachary Boulter- Chairman Marrone

Councilor Fishbein knows a person who would like to be on the committee. He does not see the harm in seeking applications.

Councilor Laffin stated that the Committee was originally supposed to be made up of five members. At the time of the forming of this Committee there were seven people who showed up, Town Council liked all seven and they were all appointed to the Committee. He said they are more of an operational Committee. He is ok with leaving the member count at six.

Councilor Allinson stated that the committee was set for five members and they have six very qualified people. She agrees with Councilor Laffin and leaves the member count to six. She said they are an advisory committee that has no time line for completion.

Councilor Reynolds says he has no problem leaving the committee as is with six members or having someone nominate someone they know. He was asking if the committee is lacking anyone with experience that would be beneficial being on the committee. He also said that these committee members are volunteers and it costs the town nothing, so if they need more members they should be able to get them.

Jason Michael of Meadow St. stated that he would love it if they had nine members or more. The more members the better able they are to do their job.

**MOTION WAS MADE to have the Building Maintenance Sub Committee continue with their current six members.**

**MADE BY: TATTA**

**SECONDED BY: REGAN**

**MOTION: PASSED**

Councilor Carmody mentioned that they should support the committee and if they need more members they should have more members.

**ROLL CALL**

**ALLINSON: AYE**

**CARMODY: NAY**

**FISHBEIN: NAY**

**LAFFIN: AYE**

**REGAN: AYE**

**REYNOLDS: NAY**

**TATTA: AYE**

**TESTA: AYE**

**MARRONE: NAY**

Chairman Marrone adjourned the meeting adjourned at 8:10pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristen Panzo  
Town Clerk

Meeting digitally recorded

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph A. Marrone III, Chairman Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kristen Panzo, Town Clerk Date

RECEIVED FOR RECORD 3-19-24  
AT 2:00 PM. AND RECEIVED BY  
Kristen Panzo TOWN CLERK