

**TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

**TUESDAY
March 22, 2022
6:30 P.M.**

RECORD OF VOTES & MINUTES

The Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, March 22, 2022 was called to order at 6:32 p.m. There was a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance was said. Councilors in attendance were Autumn Allinson, Samuel Carmody, Thomas Laffin, Joseph A. Marrone, III, Christina Tatta, Vincent Testa, Jason Zandri and Chairman Vincent Cervoni. Councilor Fishbein was absent. Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr., Town Attorney Gerald E. Farrell, Sr. and Comptroller Tim Sena were also present.

3. Consent Agenda
 - 3a. Consider and approve Tax Refunds totaling \$16,650.67 (#888-#929)
Acct. #1001001- 41020 - Tax Collector
 - 3b. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$22,500 from Contingency Accrued Expenses, Acct. #10019000-58821 to Retirement Sick Leave, Acct. #100-12100-51750 – Human Resources
 - 3c. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$5,000 from Prof. Svcs. – Labor/Grievance, Acct. #10012000-56812 to Prof. Svcs. – Employment Expenses, Act. #10012000-56728 – Human Resources
 - 3d. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$1,200 from Regular Salaries & Wages, Acct. #10010550 to Secretarial Acct., Acct. #56702 PS, P.O. #22201450-00 – Building Dept.
 - 3e. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$1,100 from Office Expenses & Supplies, Acct. #10010200-56100 to Capital-Computers, Acct. #TBD – Program Planning
 - 3f. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$165,000 from Distribution-Operations Maint. of Overhead Lines, Acct. #593 to Distributions-Overhead Conductors-Capital, Acct. #365 – Electric Div.
 - 3g. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$1,300 from Distribution-Operations Maint. Station Equipment, Acct. #592 to Distributions-Operations Maint. St Light & Signal, Acct. #596 – Electric Div.
 - 3h. Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$3,000 – P&Z

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|-------------|--|-----------------------|
| \$2,000 | From: Purchased Service Secretarial | Acct. #10010700-56702 |
| 500 | From: Office Expenses & Supplies | Acct. #10010700-56100 |
| 500 | From: Regular Salaries & Wages | Acct. #10010700-51000 |
| \$3,000 | To: Capital Expenses | Acct. #10010700-57955 |
| 3i. | Consider and approve a Transfer in the amount of \$30,000 from Contingency-Misc., Acct. #10019000-58820 to Pickleball Court, Acct. #10050050-5700-01045 - Engineering | |
| 3j. | Consider and approve Reappointment of Raymond Rys to the ZBA for a five year term effective immediately and expiring 1/8/27 – Chairman Cervoni | |
| 3k. | Consider and approve Reappointment of Steve Allinson to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a five year term effective immediately and expiring 1/8/27 – Chairman Cervoni | |
| 3l. | Consider and approve Appointment of James Heilman as an Alternate to the Inland Wetlands & Watercourse Commission (replacing a vacancy) for a three year term effective immediately and expiring 3/1/23 – Chairman Cervoni | |
| 3m. | Consider and approve Job Description for Assistant to the Animal Control Officer – Human Resources | |
| 3n. | Consider and approve bid waiver for Cavanaugh Tocci, sound mitigation consultant for P&Z for additional costs above current bid in the amount of \$5,100 – Law Dept. | |
| 3o. | Transfers Board of Education – BOE | |
| \$222,554 | From: State Grant Revenues | Acct. #2356002-45900 |
| \$222,554 | To: Educ. Grants-Program Expend. | Acct. #23560050-58100 |
| \$241 | From: State Grant Revenues | Acct. #2356002-45900 |
| \$241 | To: Educ. Grants-Program Expend. | Acct. #23560050-58100 |
| \$18,524 | From: State Grant Revenues | Acct. #2356002-45900 |
| \$18,524 | To: Educ. Grants-Program Expend. | Acct. #23560050-58100 |
| \$618 | From: State Grant Revenues | Acct. #2356002-45900 |
| \$618 | To: Educ. Grants-Program Expend. | Acct. #23560050-58100 |
| \$9,014 | From: State Grant Revenues | Acct. #2356002-45900 |
| \$9,014 | To: Educ. Grants-Program Expend. | Acct. #23560050-58100 |
| \$95,831 | From: State Grant Revenues | Acct. #2356002-45900 |
| \$95,831 | To: Educ. Grants-Program Expend. | Acct. #23560050-58100 |
| \$14,822 | From: State Grant Revenues | Acct. #2356002-45900 |
| \$14,822 | To: Educ. Grants-Program Expend. | Acct. #23560050-58100 |
| \$4,557,436 | From: State Grant Revenues | Acct. #2356002-45900 |

\$4,557,436	To: Educ. Grants-Program Expend.	Acct. #23560050-58100
\$20,000	From: State Grant Revenues	Acct. #2356002-45900
\$20,000	To: Educ. Grants-Program Expend.	Acct. #23560050-58100
\$80,000	From: State Grant Revenues	Acct. #2356002-45900
\$80,000	To: Educ. Grants-Program Expend.	Acct. #23560050-58100
\$25,000	From: State Grant Revenues	Acct. #2356002-45900
\$25,000	To: Educ. Grants-Program Expend.	Acct. #23560050-58100
\$294,379	From: State Grant Revenues	Acct. #2356002-45900
\$294,379	To: Educ. Grants-Program Expend.	Acct. #23560050-58100
\$27,935	From: State Grant Revenues	Acct. #2356002-45900
\$27,935	To: Educ. Grants-Program Expend.	Acct. #23560050-58100
\$30,550	From: State Grant Revenues	Acct. #2356002-45900
\$30,550	To: Educ. Grants-Program Expend.	Acct. #23560050-58100
\$200,000	From: State Grant Revenues	Acct. #2356002-45900
\$200,000	To: Educ. Grants-Program Expend.	Acct. #23560050-58100

MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS 3a.-3i, 3k.-3n. and 3p.

**MADE BY: LAFFIN
SECONDED BY: TATTA
VOTE: ALL AYE
MOTION: PASSED**

4. Items Removed from the Consent Agenda:

3o. Transfers Board of Education – BOE

*In Attendance: Danielle Bellizzi, Superintendent, BOE
Dominic Barrone, Business Manager. BOE
Tammy Raccio, Chair, BOE*

Chairman Cervoni asked if these are all grants that were applied for and Mr. Barrone replied no, these are grants that the amounts have changed. Chairman then asked if over a dozen are program specific and Mr. Barrone replied yes, specific targets.

Councilor Tatta asked if they go by school year or fiscal year. Mr. Barrone stated they go by year and are based on student enrollment, needs, and some entitlement grants.

Councilor Tatta asked if the amounts awarded are above what was anticipated and Mr. Barrone replied not necessarily. Councilor Tatta then asked for what reason would you get a higher amount and Mr. Barrone said the State figures that out. She then asked if these could be carried over and Ms. Bellizzi said the State gives specific guidelines and Mr. Barrone said some are multi-year,

some not and would have to go back. Ms. Bellizzi stated COVID grants are time specific and money has to be spent within a time frame. She will include this in the April presentation.

Councilor Tatta remarked that BOE does a great job at getting grants and asked if BOE has a Grant Writer. Ms. Bellizzi stated Carrie LaTorre and Aimee Turner write all grants and remarked they work very hard.

Ms. Raccio added we apply for a bit of everything, competitive grants - going against other districts, and some entitlement grants that are need based grants. She stated it doesn't mean we get every need based grant and in reality we're not getting all of the need satisfied.

Councilor Zandri said he does not see anything for transportation and noted these issues with transportation add to pressures on families and he would like to find a solution to this.

Ms. Raccio agrees with Councilor Zandri and stated we are addressing it. Mr. Barrone said we are working on it and we hope it's getting better.

- 3j. Consider and approve Reappointment of Raymond Rys to the ZBA for a five year term effective immediately and expiring 1/8/27 – Chairman Cervoni

Councilor Testa said he has known Mr. Rys for years and has a lot of respect for him and went on to explain why he is opposing this appointment. He stated it appears Council has established a new set of criteria for appointment, a new standard he is not comfortable with and can't go along with. He is going to oppose this appointment.

Councilor Laffin stated he has known Mr. Rys for 20 years. He said he knows Ray's humor can be a bit crude sometimes but family and friends know he truly loves Wallingford. He said Mr. Rys is someone that has more decades of experience than I've been alive.

Councilor Marrone stated he wasn't thrilled about what happened to Mr. Storck and doesn't like the eye for an eye attitude. He went on to state Mr. Rys volunteers his time to the town and free speech is free speech.

Councilor Zandri stated he looks at what someone's general behavior is. He will make choices that are in the best interest of the town and stated at the end of the day, we need to move this town forward.

Councilor Carmody said he served alongside Mr. Rys when he was on ZBA and enjoyed working with him but felt a precedent had been set with Mr. Storck's rejection because of his social media activity. He feels Council seems to be setting a standard for appointees of boards and commissions being vetted at a new level and stated in good conscious he cannot vote for tonight's appointment.

Joe Rusczek, ZBA Chair, said he served with Mr. Rys on the Board for eight years and asked the Council to reappoint him.

Mr. Parisi, 23 East Main Street, stated he has known Ray longer than anyone in the room and that they've had their ups and downs and went on to defend Mr. Rys' character.

Mr. Czwerinski, ZBA, thanked Mr. Rys for his service and reminded the public that people volunteer for these positions and want to do the right thing in the best interest of the town.

Ray Ross, 656 Center Street, stated he has known Mr. Rys for a number of years and he is a gentleman who speaks his mind always in the best interest of the town.

Riley O'Connell, Northford Road, stated none of us want to condemn Mr. Rys' character. He feels a lot of people listen to big issues but we're listening to petty issues - eye for an eye. He stated he doesn't know how we get out of this hypocrisy.

Nancy Fabrizi, 923 Clintonville Road, read a post shared by Mr. Rys and questioned if it could make applicants before the ZBA feel that they may not receive equal treatment.

Joan Parisi, 23 East Main Street, believes this all began with Mr. Makepeace.

Debbie Gross, Long Hill Road, stated she was here for all meetings and wants the bar to be held high and asked Councilors to vote accordingly.

Mr. Amore, 13 Jenna Road, stated that he and Mr. Rys get along although he doesn't always agree with him. He stated to Council if they vote to approve Mr. Rys he hopes they would bring Mr. Storck back.

Karen Hlavac, 85 Saw Mill Drive, respectfully requested the Council appoint Mr. Rys to another term.

Lucille Casa Grande, stated this appointment is not about Mr. Rys and Mr. Storck it's about each and every one of you.

Chairman Cervoni stated ZBA held its meeting and unanimously voted to approve Mr. Rys as Vice Chair.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

ALLINSON: YES	TATTA: YES
CARMODY: NO	TESTA: NO
FISHBEIN: ABSENT	ZANDRI: NO
LAFFIN: YES	CERVONI: YES
MARRONE: YES	

7 -AYE

1 -NAY

1-ABSENT

MOTION: PASSED

5. **PUBLIC QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD**

Mr. John Walworth read a statement regarding his service to the Town of Wallingford because of his name being brought into question at the March 8th Town Council meeting. He presented the Council with a printout of highlights of his professional certification and volunteer services.

Debbie Gross, Long Hill Road, wanted an update on Wooding/Kaplan.

Francis Proscino, 14 Jackson Avenue, expressed her disappointment in the Town Council to even equate this with what Mr. Makepeace did.

Bob Gross, Long Hill Road, questioned Mr. Sena about pension and how the stock portion is invested. Mr. Sena said it's an investment and explained there are four investment funds.

Mr. Gross asked Mr. Sena if a Treasurer was hired yet and Mr. Sena answered yes, he started in March.

Mr. Gross inquired about the pickleball court and if it went out to bid. The Mayor said it's on the agenda tonight.

Mr. Gross spoke about a small chemical spill in town and remarked if we had a Facebook page the public would be informed about road closures and such. The Mayor mentioned an incident that happened in West Haven with regard to false information being posted causing a big upheaval and stated to just call the department and trust what you are being told.

6. (a.) Consider and approve Agreement for Town to purchase 3 East Dayton Hill Road
– Law Dept.

**MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE AGREEMENT FOR TOWN TO
PURCHASE 3 EAST DAYTON HILL ROAD.**

MADE BY: LAFFIN

SECONDED BY: TATTA

The Mayor stated we have a contract to approve the purchase of this piece of the property and it would allow for convenient, safe parking for Tyler Mill and an attractive entryway.

Attorney Farrell stated \$60,000 is for purchase price and \$5,000 is for an environmental study.

Councilor Tatta feels this is an unnecessary expense to the Town. She will not support this.

David Lee stated it would be a great improvement to the area if the State of Connecticut would clean up their part. He went on to state he has lived there for 60 years and that property originally sold for \$7,000.

Chairman Cervoni stated he lived in the area for 13 years and used the park a lot. He mentioned cars parked against the gate and that there are safety issues there.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

ALLINSON: YES	TATTA: NO
CARMODY: YES	TESTA: YES
FISHBEIN: ABSENT	ZANDRI: YES
LAFFIN: YES	CERVONI: YES
MARRONE: YES	

7-AYE

1-NAY

1-ABSENT

MOTION: PASSED

- (b.) Consider and approve Transfer in the amount of \$65,000 from Cap & Non, Fund #301 to Cap & Non Land Purchase, Fund #301-TBT

MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE Transfer in the amount of \$65,000 from Cap & Non, Fund #301 to Cap & Non Land Purchase, Fund #301.

MADE BY: LAFFIN

SECONDED BY: ALLINSON

ROLL CALL VOTE:

ALLINSON: YES	TATTA: NO
CARMODY: YES	TESTA: YES
FISHBEIN: ABSENT	ZANDRI: YES
LAFFIN: YES	CERVONI: YES
MARRONE: YES	

7-AYE

1-ABSENT

1-NAY

MOTION: PASSED

7. Report from the Council Subcommittee on ARPA for discussion and possible action.

Councilor Laffin spoke about last week's meeting and stated 70 individuals joined the meeting and it was the largest discussion about non-profits and businesses. He said next week the Committee will be approving final application drafts for non-profits and individuals.

Councilor Testa asked if we set certain amounts now or wait until applications go out and see what needs are. He wants us to set priorities. He stated the memo from the Law Department was worse than a wrench in the gear and he is very concerned. He mentioned how Councilor Tatta brought up standard deduction and stated we have to make a commitment by April 23rd and we haven't been operating with that in mind and haven't even talked about municipal projects. He doesn't understand how this got here and wants an answer to this. He stated he is infuriated.

Councilor Tatta said she is not sure where to start and noted she mentioned this at other meetings that the deadline was April 30th. She suggested the entire Town Council attend the next subcommittee meeting on the 29th along with the Law Department and a consultant to get more clarification on this.

Attorney Farrell told Council it's unclear what would qualify for funding under the two options and the Law Department will have more information in the coming days.

Mr. Gross asked the Mayor how do you calculate revenue loss and the Mayor stated it was an estimate as to what the Comptroller thought was impact and that certainly we need a consultant to help us with this.

Councilor Tatta inquired about making a motion to invite the consultant to the next regular Town Council meeting and Chairman Cervoni said we can invite them without a motion.

Chairman Cervoni asked the Mayor to invite the consultant to the next Council meeting to assist in determining how the money can be spent.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN
MADE BY: TATTA
SECONDED BY: ALLINSON
VOTE: ALL AYE
MOTION PASSED**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Moss
Council Staff
Meeting digitally recorded

RECEIVED FOR RECORD 3-25-22
AT 4:00 P.M. AND RECEIVED BY
Deborah McKiernan TOWN CLERK

Vincent Cervoni, Chairman

Date

Deborah McKiernan, Town Clerk

Date