

**GLASTONBURY TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2020**

The Glastonbury Town Council with Town Manager, Richard J. Johnson, in attendance, held a Regular Meeting at 6:00 p.m. at the Council Chambers of Town Hall, 2155 Main Street, Glastonbury, Connecticut.

1. Roll Call.

Council Members

Mr. Thomas P. Gullotta, Chairman
Mr. Lawrence Niland, Vice Chairman
Dr. Stewart Beckett III
Ms. Deborah A. Carroll
Ms. Mary LaChance
Mr. Jacob McChesney
Mr. Kurt P. Cavanaugh
Mr. Whit C. Osgood
Ms. Lillian Tanski

a. Pledge of Allegiance *Led by Barbara Bailey*

2. Public Comment. *None*

3. Special Reports.

BUDGET REVIEWS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 – 6:00 P.M TO 8:00 P.M.

- Presentation and discussion concerning Town Operations, Debt & Transfer, Revenues & Transfers, Capital Reserve Fund, Capital Improvement Program and other budget related matters involving the combined 2020-2021 budget proposal.

Mr. Johnson walked through a series of slides on the Town budget. He explained that two full time positions have been pulled from the Town operating system and, for health insurance, they are in the process of conducting a formal proposal to go to the market. He noted that the budget factors were reduced from the Town Manager's original 2.25% to the BOF's recommendation of 1.92%. Mr. Johnson stated that they have been advised by auditors and pension actuaries to update to the Pub-2010 mortality tables, which has been incorporated here. The increase in the pension contribution is \$1.4 million, of which \$1.25 million is attributed to the mortality tables. The Town's share is about \$900k, which is a 4% increase.

The Council took a pause on Mr. Johnson's presentation to ask directed questions to various Town staff.

Mr. Cavanaugh asked Chief Porter if there is a policy/history of encouraging vets to enter law enforcement in Glastonbury. Chief Porter stated that they do not have a policy because they have not had the need to, up to this point. Mr. Cavanaugh then noted that West Hartford had a successful stolen vehicle task force, and he inquired whether Glastonbury plans on doing something similar. Chief Porter replied, they have tried public awareness campaigns in the past, but he will speak to the chief at West Hartford to find out more about their program.

Mr. Cavanaugh asked Mr. Pennington about the pavement rehabilitation of downtown, on Main Street. Mr. Pennington stated that he is very close to submitting a recommended list of pavements to the Town Manager, and while it is possible that the area Mr. Cavanaugh mentioned would be included, they are also looking at possible 100% grant funding of that area. Therefore, if there is a serious potential, they would rather pursue the grant program.

Mr. Cavanaugh told Ms. Dodds that he is concerned about the project that was recently completed on Hebron Avenue and Sycamore Street. He explained that when one gets off the highway, the first thing they see is the utilities. Ms. Dodds explained that that was discussed at the Town Plan and Zoning Commission and they made it a condition of approval that those utilities would be screened. The developer went to the Beautification Committee a few months ago, and he said that he had a problem with the utility companies. They currently have a landscaping bond with the utilities, so once the growing starts, they will plan around it. Ms. Dodds stated that she will look into seeing how that particular building was approved and get back to the Town Manager. Mr. Cavanaugh asked about the design. Ms. Dodds noted that they are working with the developer and developer's attorney so that the design will be more contextually sensitive. Mr. Gullotta asked if they could get a council member to sit on the Plans Review Subcommittee. Ms. Dodds stated yes, they meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month at 8:00 am in Meeting Room A.

Mr. Gullotta noted that, in the budget, they see "0000." He asked if that means that, after this year, that page will disappear from the budget. Mr. Johnson replied yes. Mr. Gullotta stated that a very small percentage of the budget will go to "the other stuff" and asked what those are. Mr. Johnson explained that the Town budget is made up of 41 separate line items, 7 of which are funded otherwise; the net increase of those different accounts increased by \$128k this year. Mr. Gullotta noted that, under Parks and Recreation, the goal is listed as 95% and the actual is 100%. He asked if, for the recreation program, there is indeed no cost to the taxpayer. Mr. Johnson stated yes, that is the Special Revenue Fund, which is a separate part of the budget, and the expenses are 100% funded. Ms. LaChance asked why the dump truck is in the operating budget. Mr. Johnson explained that the capital program is for non-recurring expenses and this is bought every year, so it becomes a recurring expense; therefore, they added it to the operating budget.

Ms. Barbara Bailey gave an update on the library renovation, noting that they are in the Detailed Design Development phase, and they hope to go to bid in the spring and start construction in the summer. Mr. McChesney asked to go through the changes they are making in the children's section. Ms. Bailey explained that they have increased the children's and teen areas. They are making the reference area into a collaborative workspace and an area for performances. Most of the furniture will be on wheels so that they can move things around. She stressed that the physical book collection is not going away. She also noted that people are concerned about

lighting and not being able to drive up to the book drop. Mr. McChesney asked about the restrooms in the children's room. Ms. Bailey replied that, currently, restrooms are not part of the renovations, but she can take a look at it. Mr. McChesney thanked library staff for all of the many wonderful events they put on.

Chairman Gullotta thanked Town staff for attending the meeting and answering the Council's questions. Town staff left at 6:38 pm and Mr. Johnson resumed his presentation on the Town budget.

Mr. Johnson noted that the BOF reduced capital transfer by \$120k, and debt service remains relatively flat going into the current year. Mr. Osgood noted that a part of that reflects that they have been funding out of cash and not bonding. Mr. Johnson stated that he thinks that the Town is in a very favorable position. He continued by noting a \$120k reduction to the Capital Reserve Transfer, going from \$6 million in 2020 to \$5.88 million in 2021. Mr. Osgood asked if that has any impact on their CIP spending. Mr. Johnson said not significantly. Mr. Cavanaugh asked what the purpose was of reducing it by \$120k. Mr. Johnson explained that the Board of Finance put it in a formula to result in a tax increase of 1.5%. Mr. Johnson noted that they will have a \$500k revenue gain in ECS funding when the budget adopted last year is compared to final state budget action for the current fiscal year. He noted that, for the investment income, they used a 1.25% assumption for FY2021, which is a \$662k reduction in revenue. In the General Fund projections, Mr. Johnson explained that they have been at \$575k for the past four years. He recommended that to help mitigate the significant cost increase of the pension, he allocated \$1 million phased over four years for potential land acquisition. He noted that they put the chart together to say that, going out, they can sustain the 12% rate.

4. **Old Business.** *None*

5. **New Business.**

a. Discussion and possible action concerning proposed amendments to Building Zone Regulations - Building Heights (set public hearing).

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

“BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby schedules a public hearing on proposed text amendments to the Building Zone Regulations concerning building heights in residential and commercial zones including Section numbers 4.1.9, 4.2.9, 4.3.9, 4.4.9, 4.5.9, 4.6.10, 4.7.10, 4.8.10, 4.13.6.e, 4.14.10, 4.15.10, 4.16.3 b-3, 4.16.4.c, 4.17.2 (d), 4.18.4.e, 4.19 (New Section) for 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 24, 2020 in the Council Chambers of Town Hall, 2155 Main Street, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated February 21, 2020 and as recommended by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission.”

Disc: Mr. Johnson noted that they worked to follow up on all of the Council's recommendations.

Result: Motion passed unanimously (9-0-0).

b. Action on Public Safety Tax Abatement (set public hearing).

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby schedules a public hearing for 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 10, 2020 in the Council Chambers of Town Hall at 2155 Main Street to consider proposed amendments to Town Code Article IV, Section 18-45 – Abatement Schedule, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated February 21, 2020.

Result: Motion passed unanimously (9-0-0).

c. Action on letter to Glastonbury State Legislators concerning DEEP Open Space Grant – 542-acre land acquisition.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby supports the attached letter seeking additional open space grant funding per previous state legislative action for Town purchase of the 542± acres of open space lands formerly owned by the Pension Fund Land of the Metropolitan District, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated February 21, 2020.

Disc: Ms. Carroll stated that she and Mr. Niland worked on a letter, outlining some options to hopefully acquire more funding from MDC and potentially acquire more land. She noted that this is a draft, but the final version would be presented to state representatives and the governor. Dr. Beckett thanked Ms. Carroll and Mr. Niland for doing this, stating that this is a great step to hopefully get back to the original deal they had for 2015-16. Mr. Cavanaugh asked what the “other land attached,” as mentioned in their comments refer to. Ms. Carroll noted that the additional acreage is missing in the letter. Other than correcting the acreage amount, Ms. Carroll stated that they can assume that this letter is a final draft. Mr. Osgood also noted a correction in the letter listing “MDC pension fund” to “MDC.”

Mr. Cavanaugh stated that he does not want MDC’s money because it comes with too many strings. They can keep their \$1 million and he would like the Town to have the freedom to do what they would like with this space. Ms. Osgood expressed that they have put themselves in a bad bargaining position and they should stay focused on asking for the \$3 million, not additional land, in this letter. Mr. Niland explained that their original draft did that, but their representative suggested this option because if MDC says no to the \$3 million, it will give them something else to ask for. Mr. Osgood stated that the “but” is the shortcoming of this letter because giving MDC another option for an acquisition (the other MDC property) is not on the table. Ms. Carroll clarified that their original draft was decidedly direct and only focused on the \$1 million, but after long conversations with representatives and Mr. Johnson, this is what they have landed on, and at this point, it is an immovable object.

Result: Motion passed (6-0-3). Mr. Cavanaugh, Mr. Osgood, and Ms. Tanski elected to not have their names listed on the letter.

d. Action to schedule Final Budget Hearing for Fiscal Year 2020-2021.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby schedules the Final Budget Hearing and action on the proposed 2020-2021 Town Operating, Education, Debt and Transfer, Revenues and Special Revenue Funds for 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 5, 2020 in the Council Chambers of Town Hall at 2155 Main Street and the Budget to be presented shall be as of the Board of Finance recommendation, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated February 21, 2020.

Result: Motion passed unanimously (9-0-0).

6. Consent Calendar.

7. Town Manager's Report.

Mr. Johnson explained that Mr. Osgood asked him a question on land trusts. One of the challenges is that until the property is conveyed, there is no enabling legislation that allows them to waive the rest of the taxes. Mr. Osgood asked if that would be different if there were an actual conveyance. Mr. Johnson stated that he does not know if that will work but he will look at it again. Mr. McChesney stated that he is excited to see the robotics competition, as a component of it will bring tourists to the area. Mr. Osgood asked if the issue with installing a pedestrian crossing at Route 17 and Main Street is just a function of cost. Mr. Johnson explained that it will be costly for the Town; they have had discussions with the DOT, and they will come up with a concept plan.

Mr. Osgood asked if the BOF could put their thoughts in writing and present it to the Council before March 5, the new date of their final budget hearing. Mr. Johnson stated that he will relay information for a letter; Mr. Gullotta suggested watching the BOF's telecast of their previous two meetings. Mr. Niland asked if there have been any updates on the Cotton Hollow site. Mr. Johnson explained that he has spoken with the property owner and will continue to do so next week; they have gone through several options.

8. Committee Reports.

a. Chairman's Report.

Mr. Cavanaugh stated that when Mr. Gullotta receives a new agenda, it might be a good time to discuss bonding land acquisition in the fall.

b. MDC.

Dr. Beckett suggested that MDC look at non-member towns to expand water distribution and do away with their non-member surcharge.

c. CRCOG.

Dr. Beckett noted that there is no report but CRCOG is looking at the qualifications for a new executive director after the current one retires next year.

9. Communications. None

10. Minutes.

a. Minutes of February 11, 2020 Regular Meeting.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves the minutes as submitted for the regular meeting held February 11, 2020.

Result: Motion passed unanimously {9-0-0}.

b. Minutes of February 11, 2020 Special Meeting.

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves the minutes as submitted for the special meeting held February 11, 2020.

Result: Motion passed unanimously {9-0-0}.

11. Appointments and Resignations.

a. Appointment of Doug Bowman to the Zoning Board of Appeals to fill the unexpired term of Charlie Murray (Alternate, D-2023).

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby appoints Mr. Doug Bowman to the Zoning Board of Appeals to fill the unexpired term of Charlie Murray (Alternate, D-2023).

Result: Motion passed unanimously {9-0-0}.

b. Appointment of Ellen Saunig to Recreation Commission (D-2023).

Motion by: Ms. Carroll

Seconded by: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby appoints Ms. Ellen Saunig to the Recreation Commission (D-2023).

Result: Motion passed unanimously {9-0-0}.

12. Executive Session.
a. Potential land acquisition.

Motion By: Ms. Carroll

Seconded By: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby enters into executive session to discuss a potential land acquisition at 7:30 pm.

Result: Motion passes unanimously {9-0-0}.

Present for the Executive Session item were council members, Mr. Tom Gullotta, Chairman, Mr. Lawrence Niland, Vice Chairman, Dr. Chip Beckett, Ms. Deb Carroll, Ms. Mary LaChance, Mr. Jake McChesney, Mr. Kurt Cavanaugh, Ms. Lillian Tanski, and Mr. Whit Osgood with Town Manager, Richard J. Johnson.

No votes were taken during the Executive Session.

Motion By: Ms. Carroll

Seconded By: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby exits executive session at 8:05 pm.

Result: Motion passes unanimously {9-0-0}.

13. Adjournment.

Motion By: Ms. Carroll

Seconded By: Dr. Beckett

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby adjourns their regular meeting of February 25, 2020, at 8:05 pm.

Result: Motion passes unanimously {9-0-0}.

Lilly Torosyan

Lilly Torosyan
Recording Clerk

Thomas Gullotta
Chairman